Batteries upon the Kingdom of the Devil.

SEASONABLE

DISCOURSES

UPON

Some Common, but Woful,

INSTANCES,

WHEREIN

Men Gratifie the Grand Enemy of their SALVATION.

By Mr. *Cotton Mather*, Author of *The late Memorable Providences relating to Witchcrafts and Possessions*; and of *Early Piety exemplified*.

LONDON,

Printed for *Nath. Hiller*, at the *Princes-Armes* in *Leaden-Hall-Street*, over-against St. *Mary Axe*. 1695.

TO

My Worthy Nephew

Mr. *Cotton Mather.*

Dear Sir,

HEre you have by the Preſs returned to you thoſe Sermons of yours, which you ſome Years ago prepared for the Publick. Such were the Hazards and

Deaths which they were in, that I believe their thus coming forth was lately altogether unexpected by you, and is now a great Surprizal to you. For ſurely you had no reaſon but to give them up as for ever loſt in this World, (as I have in brief given an account in an Epiſtle to the Reader prefixed) however you might relieve your ſelf with this Faith, that your good Will and Labour therein was with the Lord.

Poſſibly

Poſſibly that ſentence of Death which they were under might be ſome diſcouragement to you, and occaſion ſome ſad Thoughts. He who then helped you to receive it with a Gracious Submiſſion to him, without whom not a Sparrow lights on the ground, and who numbers the very Hairs of our Heads, and hath a Soveraign Right (which may neither be controlled nor queſtioned) to diſpoſe of us, and all ours,

as pleaſeth Him, now lets you ſee it was not in vain to commit them unto Him. Whatever the Workings of your Heart were under that diſappointment, I am perſwaded you will now receive them as a return unto, and a token of the acceptance of thoſe Prayers which you followed them withal when you firſt took up a purpoſe to Publiſh them, and did accordingly commit them unto Him who hath ſo Faithfully,

ſo Marvellouſly preſerved them, and hath now at laſt, through ſo many Deaths, brought them forth unto Light. Now God, who is able to make all Grace abound towards you, and doth miniſter Seed to the Sower, and preſerve it when periſhing, increaſe his Gifts and Grace in you, and multiply your Seed ſown and the Fruits thereof, to your Comfort, the Good of many, and the

Glory of his own Grace. So prayeth,

(Dear Cozen)

Your Affectionate Unkle

London, *Dec.* 15. 1693.

Nath. Mather.

TO

TO THE READER.

IT hath been observed concerning some Persons designed by God for Eminent Usefulness in their day, that great Dangers and great Deliverances have befallen them in their beginning times. Somewhat such alike Fate hath attended these Sermons. They have been in Perils on the Sea, in Perils by Robbers, in Perils among Papists and Publick Enemies, in Perils in a strange Land,

Land, yea in Deaths often. But there hath been a Wakeful Eye, and a mighty Hand of Providence over them all along. They were by the Author designed and prepared for the Publick, and to that end written out for the Press, and sent some Years ago for Old England *from* New, *in a Vessel which fell into the Hands of a* French *Privateer, by whom both Ship and Passengers were carried into* France. *But a Person there who had some acquaintance with the Privateer, obtained of him these and other Papers which were of no value to him, who was then Possessor of them. That Person sent them to a Correspondent he had in* London; *who occasionally giving a Worthy Acquaintance of*

mine a view of them, he presently discerned what these Discourses were, and for what designed, and by him they were shown to me. At first sight I knew the Hand in which they were written, and on further Perusal could not but perceive on them very discernable impresses of the Spirit of their Author, of whom the nearness of my Relation forbids me to say any thing, only this I must testifie, that these Sermons are assuredly his true and genuine Issue.

The forementioned Wakefulness of the Eye of Providence over them in all the Hazards and Deaths which they have passed through, and at last, in his own time, so bringing them forth unto the Publick, may

may give a ground of hope that God hath designed them for further Usefulness and Service.

The Subjects treated on are weighty, of general concernment, and never out of season; although perhaps in some of them the Author might have an eye more especially to the present circumstances of many in that place where they were first meditated and uttered. The Holy Ghost himself took occasion to indite many parts of Holy Scripture from some present Occurrences in a small part of Gods People: And these hath he preserved and consecrated to the use of the whole Church all the World over unto the end of time. Nor is it a new thing for Holy Men of God, not immediately inspired,

ſpired, to publiſh to the World thoſe Labours of theirs to which they were firſt ſtirred up by ſome emergencies among that People where they were ſet. A great Divine tells us, That the Caſe of thoſe to whom he miniſtred was one thing by which he was much influenced in pitching on the Subjects which he Preached on. Dr. Owens *Preface to* Spiritual-mindedneſs. *Such a communication of Gifts, and the Fruits of them, is one ſweet and happy improvement of the Communion of Saints.*

The manner of this Authors treating on theſe Subjects is ſuch, as that it is apparent he did indeavour to approve himſelf to God therein; and therefore I doubt not, but as

others

others of his Labours have, ſo theſe will commend themſelves to every Mans Conſcience in the ſight of God, eſpecially of thoſe who are Spiritual, and by reaſon of uſe have their Senſes exerciſed to diſcern between Good and Evil. The Bleſſing of God go along with them.

Nath. Mather.

THE

THE CONTENTS.

I. *Sacred Exorcisms*: Or, The Case and Cure of Persons Possessed by the Devil. *Page* 1.

II. *The Dumb Devil cast out*: Or, The Horrible Sin of a Prayerless Life Discovered. *p.* 43.

III. *The Stage-Player unmasked*: Or, The Signs and Woes of a Wretched Hypocrite. *p.* 67.

IV. *The Door of Hope*: Or, An Antidote against the Sin of Despair, in them that have been most guilty of other Sins. *p.* 95.

V. *Honey*

The Contents.

V. *Honey at the End of the Rod*: Or, Help for the Internal Diſtempers, with which External Afflictions are uſually accompanied. *p.* 117.

VI. *The Golden Curb*: Or, Sober Checks given to Raſh Paſſions. *p.* 143.

VII. *An Appendix*: Deſcribing, The Great Ambition of a Good Chriſtian. *p.* 173.

THE Righteouſneſs of God through Faith upon all without difference who believe. In Two Sermons on *Rom.* 3. 22. By *Nath. Mather*, Preacher of the Goſpel. 1694.

THE Conqueſts and Triumphs of Grace: Being a brief Narrative of the Succeſs which the Goſpel hath had among the *Indians* in *New-England*. By *Matthew Mayhew*. 1695.

Both Printed for *Nath. Hiller* at the *Princes Arms* in *Leaden-Hall-Street* over againſt St. *Mary Axe*.

Sacred Exorciſms:

OR,

The Caſe and Cure of the Poſſeſſed by the Devil.

ACTS v. 3.

Why hath Satan filled thine Heart?

THE ſinful Children of Men, expreſs their Diſobedience to the *Firſt* and the *Great* Commandment of the Law, by their not *ſerving* of, their not *ſeeking* to, their not *hoping* on, and their not *rejoycing* in the Eternal God. But there is a further, and a viler ſtep of *Impiety*, which a woful part of Mankind, præcipitate themſelves unto; and that is, *An hearkening to the Temptations of the Devil, rather than to the Propoſals of the moſt Holy Lord.* A ſad Inſtance of this we have in

that wretched *Ananias*, whom the words now read were ſpoken unto.

In the 28th Chapter of *Jeremiah*, we read concerning one *Ananias*, an ungodly Miniſter, whom God puniſhed with a ſudden Death for his Iniquity; and in the 5th Chapter of the *Acts* now before us, we alſo read of one *Ananias*, as it ſeems, an ungodly Miniſter too, whom God likewiſe puniſhed with a ſudden Death for his Iniquity. The Primitive Chriſtians in *Jeruſalem* had erected a *Bank* among them, for the relief of their Poor, Diſtreſſed, Afflicted Brethren. In the places of the moſt Proſperity, and of the beſt Regulation, the *Poor* that live upon Charity uſually make about a *Thirtieth* part of the People; but among the Primitive Chriſtians, which the Lord chiefly choſe among *The Poor of this World*, we may imagine a greater proportion of Needy ones. For the Comfort of theſe Godly *Poor*, many Gentlemen of good Eſtates, not only gave their *Revenues*, but even ſold their *Fee Simples*, as far as they thought it proper for them, and made a *Stock*, which the Apoſtles became *Truſtees* for the well-diſpoſing of.

One *Ananias*, with his Wife, pretending to follow this Example, yet ſecretly detained part of the *Price* which they had received for an *Houſe* or *Farm*, on this occaſion alienated.

Our Text is the terrible Expoſtulation of the Apoſtle towards this deceitful Man: *Why hath Satan filled thine Heart?* There are two things implyed in it. Firſt, That he had been *carried*, yea, and *hurried* on to a moſt horrible Sin,

Sin, by the *Temptations* of the *Devil*. And next, That it was his own *Act* and *Fault*, which gave the Devil this Advantage over him; there was his own *Consent* and *Folly* in hearkening to the *Temptations*.

I am not yet ready to give you the *Doctrine* which you are waiting for; we must first compare our Context, and from thence fetch two remarkable Consequences of this unhappy Mans being thus *Filled by the Devil*.

One Consequence of it was, A prodigious *Wickedness*. 'Tis charged upon *Ananias*, that he *ly'd unto the Holy Spirit*. I cannot find how to bring him in guilty of *Sacriledge*, tho' more than a Jury of *Interpreters* have brought in that Verdict also against him: But we find him guilty of grievous *Dissimulation* and *Hypocrisie*. He seemed as if he had been very *liberal*, and no less forward and sincere in foregoing his Possessions for the Publick Use, than the best of them all; but he did not really do, what he openly declared and professed for the doing of. Indeed, the Man was afraid lest he should himself come to want before he dyed; he durst not rely upon the Faithfulness of God, which alwayes provides well for the Charitable Man, so *he kept back part of the Price*. However thought he, *I'll make a show, they shall never take me for a Niggard!* This is called, *A lying to the Holy Spirit*, because it was a going to put a Trick upon those Persons that had an extraordinary Measure and Power of the *Holy Spirit* in them: For besides the committing of this Knavery in a *Church-Assembly*, wherein there is

a special Presence of the *Holy Spirit*, it was before the Apostles, which had the *Holy Spirit* in them, to a Miracle. *Vain Man, hadst thou forgotten the story of* Gehazi ? *That like him, thou shouldest not fear a discovery by the Holy Spirit of God !*

Another Consequence of it was, An horrendous *Misery*. 'Tis reported of *Ananias* here, That *hearing these words, he fell down and gave up the ghost*. At the beginning of the *Jewish-Church*, a double dealing with God was immediately followed with a deadly Revenge ; of which *Nadab* and *Abihu* was an Instance ; thus at the beginning of the *Christian Church*, in such a case we see not unlike Judgments executed. The Apostle *Peter* had newly wrought a Miracle of *Beneficence*, behold, he now works a Miracle of *Severity*, to testifie the Exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ. I remember the old Pagan *Porphyrius* exclaimed against *Peter*, as a bloody, cruel Man, for this transaction ; but *he* might have remembered, it was not the *Apostle*, it was the *Almighty*, that killed this Malefactor ; and some have an *hope*, if it be not a fond one, that he *repented* while he was expiring ; yea, that the Troubles and Sorrows of his Repentance were the things that smothered him. Here is only this further *Mystery* to be wondered at, That *Peter* himself had but a few Weeks before been guilty of as monstrous Lying, as this poor Creature here ; but upon his *weeping bitterly*, the Lord forgave him, even so far as to imploy him in passing a dreadful sentence upon one that thus transgressed. O

the

the Soveraignty of Grace! *Lord! how unſearchable are thy Judgments!*

Our Doctrine will now of its own accord fall into our hands: 'Tis this,

That when Men permit Satan, with his Temptations, to fill their Hearts, they are in the high road unto all manner of Wickedneſs and Miſery.

There are Three Propoſitions that now lye before us.

PROP. I.

There is a *Devil*, whoſe Imployment it is to *tempt* the poor Children of Men.

Let us a little examine every Article in this Propoſition. We ſay then, *There is a Devil.* Would you know what a *Devil* is? We have a deſcription of him in *Eph.* 6. 12. *A ſpiritual wickedneſs, in high places.* That is, a *wicked Spirit*, lodged in the Atmoſphere *above* and *about* the *Earth* which we walk upon. A *Devil* is properly *a Fallen Angel*; and ſo he muſt be *a Rational Spirit, full of enmity againſt God and Man.* There was a vaſt company of *Angels*, whereof the Apoſtle tells us, in *Jude* 6. *They kept not their firſt eſtate* (namely that of Holineſs and Happineſs) *but left their own habitation* (which was in the Heavenly Regions) *and God has reſerved them for everlaſting chains under darkneſs.*

ness. This Hellish Crue of *wicked Spirits*, is called, *the Devil* and *Satan*, in the singular number; and it is worth enquiring, *why?* For answer to *that*, It is not because they are *one* in point of *Individuation*. Alas, there are incredibly many *Legions* of them: We read in *Luke* 8. 30. of above Twelve Thousand which could be spared at once to keep *Garrison* in one single Man. But the Devils are all as *one* upon these two accounts; both of which the 12th Chapter of *Matthew* gives us Instructions about: They are *one* for their *agreement*; they all espouse *one* Design, and follow *one* Business; they don't fall out among themselves: And then also, they are *one* for their *Government*; there is a *Monarchy* among them; and they are all united under one *Prince*, the Commands and Orders of which *Grand Seigniour* they all yield the most exact Obedience to. This is *the Devil!* But what is the *Employment* of these *wicked Spirits* here? Why, for that we say, *Temptation is the employment of the Devil.* There are three famous Names by which this Tygre is distinguished: and there is a reference to *Temptation* in them all. He is called, the *Satan*, and the *Tempter*, and the *Devil*. *Before* he sets upon us, then he is a *Satan*; that is, a malicious and a malignant *Adversary*; he *hates* us infinitely, and longs to see us miserable. *After* he sets upon us, then he is a *Devil*; that is, a clamorous *Accuser*; he will traduce us, and reproach us, at the *Courts* in the invisible World, where the Lord gives out his Commissions about our Concernments here. But while he is at work with

with us, all that while he is our *Tempter*. To *tempt* a Man is properly to perſwade him, and ſeduce him to ſome evil thing. We all owe a continual *Allegiance* unto God, and it is as well our *Intereſt* as our *Duty* to *acknowledge him in all our wayes*. Now the Devil by his *Temptations* is evermore ſolliciting us to deny unto our God ſomething of the *Homage* and *Honour* that is due unto him, and leave the *Paths* wherein we ſhall *find reſt unto our ſouls*. He has a Natural Propenſity and Inclination to this *Deviliſh* work; and inveterate *Cuſtom* of more than Five Thouſand Years, has doubtleſs increaſed that *Habit* in him. If you ask *how* the *Devil* becomes our *Tempter*? I muſt Anſwer, Sometimes 'tis more *immediately*; he has inexplicable wayes of applying himſelf unto our Souls, and of preſſing and puſhing them unto many ſinful exorbitancies. But ſometimes 'tis more *mediately*: The *Men* of the World, and the *Things* of the World, are the *Tools* with which he operates upon us; by theſe he throwes the *Sparks* of Hell upon our Luſts, until he has made them flame and rage into the worſt of all abominations. If you ask, *why* the Devil becomes our *Tempter*? I muſt Anſwer, 'Tis partly out of *Malice* at God. He would fain be in the *Throne* of God, and he cannot endure that God ſhould have any Subjects or Children in the World. And partly, 'tis out of *Envy* at Man. He cannot brook it, that *Man* ſhould be Saved, and *he* be Damned; that *Man* ſhould be Crowned, and *he* be Chained; that *Man* ſhould be in the *Boſom* of God, and he lye in

the *bottom* of Hell for ever. Tis *this* that puts him upon *tempting*, and vexing and plaguing of us all.

PROP. II.

The *Temptations* of the Devil sometimes prevail so far as to *fill the Hearts* of the Men whom they are used upon. Many Men are so conquered by the Temptations of the *Devil*, that they let him into their *Hearts*, and their Hearts then become as full of the *Devil* as ever they can hold. There are two or three things, in regard of which the *Devil* sometimes *fills* the Heart of a miserable Sinner.

First, The Devil *blinds* the Heart of a Sinner, and so he *fills* the Heart of him. We read concerning them that are *full* of the *Devil* in 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. *The God of this world hath blinded the minds of them.* The *Devil* is called, *The prince of darkness*; and it is an Hellish *darkness* which he clouds the Mind of a Sinner with. The Devil so *blinds* the Mind of many a Man with his Temptations, that he can't see the *way wherein he should go*; he calls *evil good*, *and good evil*; and he is plunged into *damnable delusions.* The Devil perverts the *understanding* of many a Man, and makes him either to see *nothing*, or to think *amiss* of all sacred things. The Sinner having his eyes put out, the *Devil* now makes the Man to *grind* for him in all manner of Iniquity. When once the Devil has thus muffled and hood-winked a poor Sinner, he *fills*

fills him with all confusion; and he brags, *Now the Man is mine for ever!* The Devil does what he will with a Sinner, when once he has made a *dark Dungeon* of his wretched Soul.

Secondly, The Devil *gains* the Heart of a Sinner, and so likewise he *fills* the Heart of him. This *Victory* of the Devil over a Sinner has two degrees to the compleating of it. First, The Devil *enters* the Heart of the Sinner. When an hideous Man once became *full* of the *Devil*, 'tis said in *Luke* 22. 3. *Then Satan entred into him.* The Devil does *besiege* the Soul of a woful Man with his Temptations; at last the poor Man delivers up the Keys of the Castle, and e'en lets the Devil *enter* with all his Forces there. The Devil gets all the *Faculties* of the Soul in his possession; so that after this, he has the *Intellect* of the Man to argue for *him*, the *Memory* of the Man to be *his* Treasury, and all the *Affections* of the Man to side with *his* Parties, *his* Intents. As that sorry King said once to the *Syrian*, *I am thine, and all that I have:* So the Sinner overcome with Temptations, at length says to the Devil, *Here, take my Heart, it is thine, and all that I have.* When 'tis come to this pass, then; Secondly, The Devil *commands* the Heart of the Sinner. 'Tis said about such as are *full* of the *Devil*, in 2 *Tim.* 2. 26. *They are in the Snare of the Devil, taken captive by him at his will.* With his Temptations the Devil so far prevails against a woful Sinner, that he has the poor Man in a *Toyl*; the Devil can drag him hither and thither, and e'en do what he will with him. The Devil becomes the

the abſolute Commander of his undone Soul: If the Devil ſay, *Come*, he comes; if the Devil ſay, *Go*, he goes; if the Devil ſay, *Do this*, he does it, and he cannot for his life do otherwiſe. Temptations prove to the Sinner like a *Spiders web*; the Devil even rolls up the ſilly Fly in his curſed Cobwebs; and though he flutters and ſtruggles a little, yet he ſucks out the Heart-blood of him when ever he pleaſes. Thus 'tis when the Devil *fills* the Hearts of Men. But that we may make a full *concluſion* of this *Propoſition*, take this one *Concluſion* to perfect what we have begun to ſay.

'Tis our *hearkening* to the *Temptations* of the Devil, that gives him opportunity thus to *blind*, and *gain*, and *fill* our Hearts. He cannot ſo come at us, as to *fill* us, unleſs by our *compliances* with his *Temptations* we open the doors of our Souls unto him. We find in *Gen.* 3. 2. our Mother did firſt *parley* with the Devil, before he could prevail upon her; but when once he had ſo far prevailed as to make her *yield*, ſhe was then quickly *full* of him. 'Tis our *yielding* to the Devil that procures his *filling* of us. The *Devil* could not throw our Saviour, although he had him on the *Battlement* or the *Gallery* of the Temple; he ſaid, *Caſt thy ſelf down*. Thus the Devil muſt have a Mans own conſent before he can *fill* the Man. And every time we hearken to a Temptation of his, we do ſomewhat permit his filling of us.

PROP.

PROP. III.

When once the *Temptations* of the Devil have prevailed ſo far as to *fill* the Hearts of Men, they go on to all *wickedneſs* and *miſery*. And this will be evident from theſe Conſiderations.

Firſt, When *Satan* fills the Hearts of Men, there is a deſperate and an horrible *madneſs* in them. A Natural *madneſs* is often cauſed by the Influence of the Devil upon the Children of Men. It was a common Sentiment among the *Jews* of old, That *madneſs* was oftentimes produced by the *Energy* of *Evil Spirits*; eſpecially, if the *madneſs* were *ſine Febri*. Some *Devil* 'tis which raiſes the *Poyſonous Fires* in poor Men, to ſuch an heat and heighth as cauſes a *madneſs* in them. Hence twas ſaid concerning a *mad Man*, in *Matth.* 17. 15, 18. *He is Lunatick*; that is, one diſtracted at certain times of the *Moon*; and it follows, *Jeſus rebuked the Devil*. Be ſure there is a *Spiritual Madneſs* which the Devil cauſes in the Hearts which he has made himſelf owner of. When a Sinner has once reſigned himſelf unto the Devil, it may be ſaid of him, as in *Eccl.* 9. 3. *Madneſs is in his heart*; and then he will ſtick at nothing, though it ſhould prove never ſo *deadly* to him. What was blaſphemouſly ſaid of our Saviour, may very righteouſly be ſaid of a Sinner, in *John* 10. 20. *He hath a Devil, and is mad*. But when once a Man is *mad*, what is there to hinder him from the utmoſt *wickedneſs* and

and *misery*? The more *unreasonable* any thing is, 'tis the more agreeable to a Sinner that is acted by the Devil; he has upon him that Plague, *To be smitten with Madness and Blindness, and astonishment of Heart.*

Secondly, When *Satan* fills the Hearts of Men, he will have wayes to *reconcile* them unto the most formidable Impieties in the World. There are certain *pretended Arguments* that the Devil has to perswade all manner of Sins withal; and when once he is got into the Heart of a Man, he can give a strange Force and Strength to those *vain Pretences*. The Devil will perswade the Heart of such a Man, that Sin is a very *Pleasurable* thing. He so vitiates the taste of him, that he thinks, as in *Prov.* 9. 17. *Stolen waters are sweet.* He now finds that *sweetness* in unlawful things, which 'tis impossible to restrain his Appetites unto: It meerly bewitches him, and he becomes like that poor Man, who being told that he must *leave his Drinking*, or *lose his Eye-sight*; replyed, *Then farewel these poor Eyes of mine.* The Devil will also perswade the Heart of such a Man, that Sin is a very *necessary* thing. He urges upon him that which he pressed upon our Saviour, in *Matth.* 4. 3. *It is for Bread*; you'll starve, you'll dye, if you do it not. He now imagines that without the doing of unlawful things, he is utterly undone in the World; and if he can say once, *The thing is needful*, he will never trouble himself, whether it be *sinful* or no. In the mean time, there is but *one thing* to withhold the Sinner from the worst Abominations in the World;

World; and this *one thing* does the Devil keep a cruel *muzzle* upon. When a Sinner is ruſhing on to his own ruine, his Conſcience, *that* ſtands in his way, as the Angel did with a drawn Sword, in *Balaams* of old; that ſtands and cryes, and pleads, *O do not this abominable thing!* But when the Devil is in a Mans Heart, he claps a ſtrange *Extinguiſher* upon that *Candle of the Lord.* The Devil has a way now to *bribe* the Conſcience of a Sinner. As we read of ſome in *Tit.* 1. 15. *Their Conſcience is defiled*; ſo the Devil will often debauch the Conſcience of a Man at ſuch a rate, that *Conſcience* will even turn *Advocate* for unlawful things; the Man will now commit the moſt unparallell'd Villanies, and yet ſay, *I verily thought that I ought to do many ſuch things*: Or at leaſt, the Devil has a way to *ſear* the Conſcience of a Sinner, We read in 1 *Tim.* 4. 2. about *a Conſcience ſeared with an hot iron.* Thus the Devil will *cauteriſe* the *Conſcience* of a Man, till he may cut it, and wound it, with all manner of Guilt, and yet never be touched with any Remorſe at all. Behold, whether you do not now ſee a Sinner galloping apace towards the fartheſt *wickedneſs* and *miſery!* And what is there to ſtop his furious careers?

Thirdly, When *Satan* fills the Hearts of Men, he inſpires them with a deſperate *Enmity* againſt the moſt probable Inſtruments of their eternal good. The Devil makes Men very impatient of *Reproof*; and when he is got into the Hearts of them, one had as good *meet a Bear bereaved of her whelps*, as go to controul them in their evil

evil wayes. The Almighty God has his *Offices* in the World, whose Work 'tis to keep Sinners from the Destruction which they would bring upon themselves; 'tis *to pull them as brands out of the fire.* But alas, these *Fire-brands* of Hell will only black and burn those that shall faithfully go to meddle with them. The only way to save a self-destroying Sinner, is, *to tell him the Truth.* But if you dare to do that, you shall soon complain, like *Paul* in *Gal.* 4. 16. *Am I become your enemy because I tell you the truth?* When the *Devil* has hurled a poor Sinner into the *horrible pits* of Sin, he presently makes a meer *Dog* of him; so that like a *Dog*, he'll snap and snarl at any one that shall go to pull him out; and there is no Remedy but he must perish there.

Hence 'tis that a Zealous Minister of God is usually an extream and odious *Eye-sore* to such a Sinner: Of a Faithful Minister he'll say, as *Ahab* of that Prophet, in 1 *Kings* 22. 8. *As for that man, I hate him*: And he could be content if all the Servants of the Lord were served as once Fourscore of them were by the *Arian* Persecutors. There have been dreadful and bloody *Storms* in all Ages raised against the true Ministers of God; but they have all proceeded from the efficacy of the Devil on the *Hearts* of evil Men. If more than Twenty Hundred Holy Men of God should all be silenced in one day, these would be admirably pleased with it, and wish, *That the mouths of them all were in like manner stopt.* Why, what's the matter? 'Tis because these Ministers would save

ſave Men from the *Paths of the Deſtroyer*; theſe Miniſters would bring Men to a Saving Acquaintance and Communion with the Bleſſed God. They might indeed beg, as the Apoſtle did, *Forgive us this wrong!* But when People have the Devil in them, the Paſtors never ſhall be forgiven ſo great an Injury; the *Witneſſes* of the Lord Jeſus muſt, as in *Rev.* 11. 11. *Torment them which dwell on the Earth.* Yea, the more Eminent any Miniſter ſhall be, for his Deſire and Power, *to do good unto all*, the more ſhall ſuch a Miniſter be maligned, reproached, reviled in the World. There was once a Prophet very remarkable for his undaunted and unwearied Pains to make all his Neighbours Happy; but the Complements beſtowed ſtill upon that Miniſter of God, were thoſe in 1 *King.* 18. 17. *Thou art he which troubles Iſrael*; ſaid they, we owe all our *Troubles* to the Counſels of *that* Man; 'tis *he* that has cauſed all our uncomfortable *Revolutions.* It were well for us, if *he*, and all ſuch, were hanged out of the way. Never ſhall any Man do much good for the Souls of his Neighbours, but the World will treat him as they did the excellent *Athanaſius* of old; they will ſpit the baſeſt and blackeſt Venom upon him; and when they can do nothing elſe, they'll write Libels, wherein, *Omne ſcelus viro ſancto objicitur*, to render him not capable of being any further ſerviceable. Eſpecially, there are ſome ſorts of *Sectaries* more peculiarly acted by the Devil, in ſtorming at the Miniſters of God. When the *Devil* got into *Nebuchadnezzar*, he was, I conceive, taken with

with a *Lycanthropy*, a Disease which gives a Man the Temper and Motion of a *Wolf*. Why when the *Devil* gets into some Hereticks, he makes *Wolves* of them, and they fall a *barking* presently, and this, as is proper, chiefly at the *Shepherds* of the Flock; the best Name they can find for them, is *Dogs*, and *Priests*, and *Hirelings*. These are things that push on the *wickedness* and *misery* of a poor Sinner into a depth beyond all recovery; who shall fetch them back, if their *Ministers* be made incapable?

Fourthly, When *Satan* fills the Hearts of Men, he makes them rush upon such hardy *ventures* as they must be utterly and for ever spoiled with. The Devil will make Sinners very *venturesome*, when once he becomes a *Commander* over them. The Devil is their *Driver*; and what can the event now be, but this; *They shall be suddenly broken to pieces, and there shall be no Remedy!* We read of certain *Swine* which had the *Devil* in them, in *Matth.* 8. 32. *Behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.* The Devil does inchant poor Sinners by the delicious but poysonous *Cups* of Sin, into such *Swine* as those; so he'll *run* them over the most amazing Precipice in the World, and they shall throw themselves into a *deep*, without fear of *choaking* there. I'll tell you who was one of them *Swine*; 'twas *Pharaoh*, bloody *Pharaoh*. Who would have imagined that *Pharaoh* could have been so fool-hardy as to venture into the *Red Sea* after all the plagues and signs of his approaching ruine? But having the *Devil* in him, he ventures

tures in till *the Sea covered him, and he sank as Lead in the mighty waters.* The obdurate *Pharaohs* of this World have many and many a time seen, that the great God brings the *Sea*, yea an whole Ocean of Judgments upon them that hinder this *Instituted Worship* in their Territories; and yet they still venture upon this destructive Policy, till one after another they all perish in the *waters*; but now the *Devil* knowes the Reason of it. In *Rev.* 20. 8. we read of a greater venture yet, that shall be made near the last of the *latter dayes*, by an odd Race of ungodly Men; and what emboldens it? Why the *Devil shall deceive the Nations* into an expedition that shall bring *Fire from Heaven* upon them all.

The greatest venture ever made by a Mortal Creature, is in *persecuting* the People of God. The Church of God is truly called, *A burdensome Stone*; it alwayes breaks the Backs of them that will be heaving at it: And that *Stone* yet lies, and lives, and growes, and God will yet make a glorious *Mountain* of it. The Lord Christ has told us, in *Matth.* 21. 44. *Whosoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.* 'Tis an allusion to the capital Punishment of *Stoning*, used among the *Jewes* of old: They first gave the Malefactor a thrust, which made him fall with his Loins upon a great *Stone*; and then they cast that great *Stone* upon the Man himself: If this dispatched him not, the Executioners threw more *Stones* upon him. This then is the Assertion of our Saviour, If

Men will go to afflict, abuſe and oppreſs the People of God, the Great God will *ſtone* them to Death for it; and there will need no other *ſtone*, but the cauſe and the cry of that oppreſſed People to do their buſineſs for them. And yet a vaſt party of poor Mankind are making this deſperate *venture* every day; the whole World is full of *Perſecution*, wherever you can find any Objects for old *Cains* Club to be uſed upon. 'Tis now from the Malice of the *Devil* that all *Perſecution* does ariſe; 'tis the *Devil* that makes Men ſo ventureſome as to wrong the Church of God. It is ſaid in *Rev.* 2. 10. *The devil ſhall caſt ſome of you into priſon, and ye ſhall have tribulation ten dayes*; referring perhaps to *Trajans* Perſecution. 'Tis the *Devil* that makes Men to *impriſon*, and ſmite, and kill their more pious Neighbours.

What ſhall I ſay more? Can there be a greater venture, than for a vile Man to *challenge* and *combate* the Infinite God himſelf? Said the Lord in *Ezek.* 22. 14. *Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be ſtrong, in the dayes that I ſhall deal with thee?* 'Tis the moſt outragious *Phrenſie* that ever was, for a ſilly Worm to enter into a *Battle* againſt the Omnipotent God; for a ſorry Potherd of the Earth, to make his Batteries upon that God who *overturns the mountains in his anger, and makes the very pillars of heaven to tremble.* But the Devil every day cauſes this *Phrenſie* in the Children of Men; wretched *Briars* and *Thorns*, when the Devil is in them, will run ſuch a venture as to commence a Battle againſt that God who is a *devouring Fire.*

Doubt-

Doubtleſs the *Devil* knew Jeſus to be the Son of God, and yet the daring wretch would make an aſſault upon that Glorious One. Why, ſuch a venturesome Diſpoſition does the *Devil* cauſe in the Souls that belong unto him, that they will fly upon the Almighty God himſelf; it may be ſaid of them as in *Job* 15. 25, 26. *He ſtretches out his hand againſt God, he ſtrengthens himſelf againſt the Almighty, he runs upon the thick boſſes of his buckler.* All the Attributes of God are turned upon irreclaimable Sinners, like ſo many pointed ſharpened *Boſſes of a Buckler*; but when they are acted by the Devil, they will puſh upon theſe terrible *Boſſes*. They do like the mad *Caligula*; when the God of Heaven thunders in Heaven, they go with little ſquibbing Rockets to thunder back again upon him. The Prophet well compares them unto *an Horſe ruſhing into the battle*. Though they are fairly warned that if they go on in their Sins, the Great God will make them feel the force of his Iron Fiery Arms, *what care they?* They'll go on in the rage of Sin, *mocking at Fear*, and they'll play with Sin juſt before the Canons roaring mouth. What is there now to keep a Sinner from the utmoſt *wickedneſs* and *miſery*? Alas, what won't Men do when the *Devil's* in them?

Laſtly, When *Satan* fills the Hearts of Men, he keeps them from all good *Impreſſions* by the means of Grace upon them.

The *Devil* will, if he can, cauſe Men to live without any means of Grace at all; he will get them to dwell in *the region of the ſhadow of death*;

death; even in those places where they *perish for the lack of Vision.* We find, that when the *Devil* was got into *Cain*, in *Gen.* 4. 16. *He went out from the presence of the Lord:* So the *Devil* causes Men to go away from the House, away from the Institutions, and away from the Ordinances of the Lord Jesus Christ. When the *Silver-Trumpets* of the Lord Jesus were to sound in the other *Hemisphere* of our World, the *Devil* got a forlorn Crue over hither into *America*, in hopes that the Gospel never would come at them here; and he still gets incredible multitudes and myriads of People elsewhere to live like our *Indians*, without the *Gospel of our Salvation* among them.

But where the Devil cannot make Men so barbarous as to live altogether *without* the means of Grace, he will cause them so to attend upon those means, as to find no profit by them. We are told of some in *Mark* 4. 15. *When they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and takes away the Word that was sown in their hearts.* Thus, the Devil will entice people to stay away from the House of God, upon very frivolous Pretences and Excuses: There shall be a *Lecture* in a Town, and not one seventh part of the Inhabitants be present at it, that they may *hear the words whereby they may be saved*; perhaps, if it be but a little cold, then they'll keep at home when they should be hearing the *Word of Life*, and they have got, they think, a Scripture too for doing so; *That God will have Mercy and not Sacrifice.* 'Tis possible they'll promise in the mean time to *read a Chapter in* Job; and if they

they do, I wish it may be the Fourteenth Chapter there. But if they come and sit among the People of God, how do they behave themselves? Their *Minds* are *wandering* with a very deadly fickleness; they are Buying, Selling, Travelling, or perhaps plunging themselves into cursed Adulteries, with a *Fancy* roving to *the ends of the Earth*. Why, the *Devil* has carried them out a Hunting with him. And it is well if their *Eyes* been't *sleeping* too; many will even set themselves to sleep in that place, whereof a true Child of *Jacob* would say, *How dreadful is this place! 'Tis the House of God, and the Gate of Heaven!* Why, 'tis the *Devil* that rocks the Cradle for them. Yea, 'tis usual for the Devil to make Men *carp*, and *cavil*, and *quarrel* at what is delivered in the House of God, when they should be thereby rather converted from their evil wayes. They'll *rail*, or *scoff*, or like *Stephens* Hearers, they will gnash their *Teeth* at the Heralds of Heaven; but, alas, they will not *mend* at the Dispensations of the Gospel.

We have seen some under a Bodily molestation by *Evil Spirits*, to stop their Ears, and roar and faint when any good thing was to be uttered in the Room, that so they might be sure to hear nothing of it. Why, *Evil Spirits* make Men continually do what is equivalent thereunto; even to deprive themselves of all benefit by the means of Grace; and what will then become of them? What *wickedness* or *misery* can they be refrained from?

APPLICATION.

I. Let us pity the forlorn Estate of those, whose *Hearts* the Devil is every day filling of. Since they are in the road unto all manner of *wickedness* and *misery*, let us count them subjects for all manner of *compassion* with us. Who could without yearning and bleeding Bowels, have seen the Man that had an *unclean Spirit* in him, and that, as in *Mark* 5. 5. *Was alwayes crying, and cutting himself with stones?* Alas, alas, that is the case of the biggest part of Mankind by far; the *Devil* fills the Hearts of them, and they cause the Lord Jesus to be alwayes complaining over them, *They sin against me, and wrong their own souls!* Look, O look with a mournful Eye upon the state of our Brethren abroad in the World. It is upon computation affirmed, that near two thirds of the World are *perfect Pagans* unto this very day; it may be said of them, as the Scripture speaks, *They serve dumb Idols as they are led*; and it is the Devil that is their *leader*. Besides these, there is *Mahomet*, that monstrous Devil of the *East*, who has covered about a fifth part of the World with his infatuated followers; he has made meer *Ideots* and *Harpies* of many Millions ever since the Wo-Trumpets have begun to sound. About a *sixth part* of the World is called *Christendom*; and of that, what a *large part* is enveloped in the thick darkness of *Popery*, whereof the Apostle tells us, *'Tis through the working of Satan*; and *therein men believe a lye*,

that

that they may all be damned. What a thing is this? *Lord, what is the depth of thy Judgments upon a deſolate World!* O where is our pity for the vaſt ſhoals of poor Souls, whereof the *Devil* has thus made a Prey? But let us then ſhow our ſincere pity by our ardent Prayer, for the haſtening of that glorious day, wherein the *Dragon, that old ſerpent, which is the Devil and Satan, ſhall be bound,* and wherein *Gods way ſhall be known upon the Earth, and Salvation among all people.*

But what *pity*, what Heart-breaking pity ſhould we then have upon our own *Relations*, whoſe Hearts we ſee the Devil ſadly filling of! We may lament over many of our profane carnal careleſs Friends, *That the Devil ſtill has them in his clutches.* And ſhall we not pity thoſe *Lambs* of ours, which we ſee the devouring *Lions* of Hell apace carrying away? But let our *pity* here alſo inflame our Prayer. We read of a poor Woman that cryed unto our Lord Jeſus, in *Matth.* 15. 22. *Have mercy on me, O Lord, my daughter is grievouſly vexed with a devil.* So let us go and pray for our unregenerate Friends, *Lord have mercy on this poor Friend of mine, for they have a Devil filling of him.* Do thus with moſt undeniable Supplications.

II. Let us make ſome *Tryals*, whether *Satan* with his Temptations have indeed *filled* our Hearts, or no? There are *multitudes, multitudes* of doleful Creatures in the World, who upon a ſtrict Examination will be found as *full*

of the Devil, as ever they can hold. Let us proceed unto that Examination then, which may discover the people that are in the *high road* unto all *wickedness* and *misery*.

Only 'tis a Caution to be first entred, for the comfort of some discouraged persons, *We must not think the Devil is* filling *of us, meerly because we feel him* vexing *of us*. 'Tis often so, that those Men who have least of the Devil *dwelling* in them, have most of the Devil *striking* at them. 'Tis possible, some of you are hurried by prodigious *Injections* of the *Devil*, and haunted with suggestions that are fraught with *Atheism* and *Blasphemy*, and horrible *Unbelief*. Such Hellish Thoughts as those are called *Musca Infernales*, by one of the Ancients; and *Belzebub* the God of *Flies* does hideously Fly-blow the Minds of many persons by such *Hell-Flies* as these. But let no Christian conclude his Heart *full* of the Devil, because the Devil does infest and molest his Heart with such horrible Thoughts. The design of the Devil is to affright you into an hard and harsh Opinion of your selves, and set your Souls all on a light fire with amazements, by hurling at you these *Fiery Darts*. A good Man will be disturbed at *Atheism* and *Blasphemy* in the Mouths of other Men; so said he in *Psal.* 44. 15, 16. *My confusion is continually before me, for the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth.* But much more, when he finds *Atheism* and *Blasphemy* roaring in his own poor Heart, it throwes him into a terrible consternation; so the Devil makes a sport of him. In this case 'tis often with good Men, as it was with *Josephs*

Brethren;

Brethren; an horrible Thought is laid in their *Soul*, as the Cup was in the *Sack* of old; the Devil then charges them with it, and ſuch is the tenderneſs of their Conſcience, that they own, *'Tis indeed ſo, I have been an Atheiſt, and a Blaſphemer before the Lord.* Thus the Devil attains his ends! But be aſſured, ye tempted Souls, the Devils being ſo very *buſie* with you, is no ſign that he is *filling* of you. Such Annoyances of Satan are incident unto the beſt of Men. We find in 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. an holy *Paul* himſelf moſt miſerably *buffeted* by the Devil. An holy *Job*, we ſee in *Job* 2. 9. followed with ſuch a motion of the Devil as that, *Curſe God and dye.* Yea, no leſs an one than our Bleſſed Lord Jeſus Chriſt, was urged once to ſay, *That the Devil is God.* Know it, ye troubled Souls, theſe *Inſinuations* of the Devil into your Hearts, will never be laid unto your charge, if you do not embrace and cheriſh them. Theſe *Weeds* of Hell don't grow in your Hearts; 'tis the Devil that has thrown them over the Wall; if you don't harbour them, and humour them, you ſhall not be condemned for them. In ſhort, One of the Antients well diſtinguiſhed between the *barkings* of the Devil, and the *bitings* of the Devil; when the Devil only preſſes us to wicked things, hitherto the Dog only *barks*; he *bites* not until we heartily entertain what he offers unto us. Be comforted then; you are yet *clear of the great Tranſgreſſion.*

But let us now paſs to the Real Characters of them that have the Devil indeed *filling* of their Hearts.

The

The antient *Sadducees* looked upon *Devils* to be no other than certain evil *Qualities* or *Distempers* in the Children of Men. 'Twas their Errour, and it is easie to show whence it arose. As for us, when we see many *evil Dispositions* in sinful Men, we do not say, those things are *Devils*; but we may take it for granted, the *Devils* by filling of their Hearts have caused those Dispositions.

In general, When one is a person of an *evil Spirit*, it is an *evil Spirit* that has filled him with it. Particularly, id.

First, The *Devil* has fill'd the Heart, when *Lust* is alwayes glowing in it, and heating of it. It is not alone in *Matth.* 10. 1. that the *Devils* are called *unclean Spirits*. When Men are given to *uncleanness*, they alwayes invite the *Devil* to a lodging with them. *Uncleanness* reigns most in those places and those persons, that have most of the *Devil* in them; and hence a large part of the *Devil-worship* used among the *Pagans*, has, like that of *Baal Peor*, had abominable Incentives and Practices of *uncleanness* in it. There are those that love to have lascivious imaginations rolling in their Minds; that imploy divers of their *Senses* to excite and provoke such imaginations, and that prosecute them with such *Actions* as to use the Apostles expression, *'tis a shame to speak of*. Baudy *Talks*, *Books* and *Pictures* are common things among many that would, it may be, keep clear of more outragious *Whoredoms*. And besides, the grosser *Filthinesses* which cannot but wound the Consciences of all that are not beyond all measure

ſure hardened in Impiety, there are the curſed *ſelf pollutions* which are counted light and ſmall matters by many People, though the Word of God has condemned them as thoſe *effeminacies* which keep Men out from the *Kingdom of Heaven* for ever. Why, the Devil who is an *unclean Spirit* has poſſeſſion of the Hearts that are thus defiled. Theſe are the *Goats* that muſt one day *burn* with the *Devil and his Angels*: why, 'tis from the *Devil and his Angels* that they do already *burn*. The Fire of *Luſt* is the very Fire of *Hell*; the Devil has laid a pan of *Hell fire* in the Soul of the profane *Adulterer*; the Heart of ſuch a Wretch is in the Scripture compared unto an *Oven*; and the Devil has filled that *Oven* with a Fire fetched from the very bottom of Hell. Here are ſome of thoſe to whom we may ſay, *Why hath Satan filled thine heart?*

Secondly, The Devil has filled the *Heart*, when 'tis puffed up with *pride*. We read in 1 *Tim.* 3. 6. *He that is lifted up with pride, falls into the condemnation of the devil.* The *Devil* is *a proud Spirit*; it was his *Pride* that was his *fall* at firſt; and when he would give *us* a *fall* he does firſt by *Pride* give us a *lift*. It is an uſual thing for Men to have an high Opinion of their own *Excellencies*; they do with a tickled Fancy behold their own *Gifts*, their own *Attainments*, their own *Performances*, and all their *Priviledges*; 'tis poſſible their very *Attire* becomes their *Glory*; and ſo according to the Apoſtles expreſſion, *They glory in their ſhame*; they quickly come to take offence if all their Neighbours do not now acknowledge them as more *eminent* than

them-

themſelves; they grow diſcontented with ſuch an *eſtate* and *ſtation* as God has placed them in; and they look with a ſtrange diſdain upon thoſe whom they reckon their *Inferiours*: Yea, 'tis well if they don't arrogate ſome *excellency* to themſelves, which they never were owners of; if they don't aſcribe to themſelves thoſe things which they never had, which they never did, which they ought never to pretend unto. But who is it that has thus inflamed the Hearts of Men! Truly the *Devil* is that *Leviathan* who is *King over the Children of Pride*; and his *ruling* of them is by his *filling* of them. When the Devil is in the *Bodies* of Men, he often *ſwells* them with a *Tympany* that is much diſcourſed of by the writers of thoſe matters. Thus he does when he is in the Hearts of Men; he *ſwells* them with a very Diabolical *Tympany*. When you ſee a ſilly little *Frogg* ſwelling towards the dimenſions of an *Oxe*, you may be ſure 'tis from ſome inflation of the Devil in him. Here are more to whom we may ſay, *Why hath Satan filled thy heart?*

Thirdly, The *Devil* has fill'd the *Heart*, when *Drink* has fill'd the *Head*. It is ſaid in *Epheſ.* 5. 18. *Be not drunk with wine, but be filled with the ſpirit.* It ſeems they that have the *ſpirit* of ſtrong Liquors intoxicating of them, cannot be filled with the *Holy Spirit* of God: But this argues that another *Spirit*, a wicked *Spirit*, muſt then be filling of them; the *ſpirits* of ſtrong Drinks, afford a ſort of *Pabulum* or Nouriſhment unto the Devil in the Souls of Men. There are many who drive a trade of Drinking

to

to *exceſs*, even till they have *diſguiſed* themſelves. Many are never well until they feel they have drunk themſelves up to ſome ridiculous *elevations*. I ſhould wrong the very *Dogs* and *Swine*, if I ſhould ſay, that theſe Miſcreants made *Bruits* of themſelves; no, the *Bruits* don't care to be drunk: The Rider, in the well-known Story, could not make his *Horſe* drink an *Health*, after the *Beaſt* counted himſelf to have drunk enough. But I muſt rather ſay of them, they turn themſelves into *Devils*; or at leaſt, they turn the *Devils* into themſelves; the Devil goes down with every *unlawful Cup*, which they are pouring in. You may obſerve it among the Barbarous Nations of the World, which the Devil is yet a *God* unto, the Vice of *Drunkenneſs* muſt be Epidemical among them, and where the more liquid wayes of Intoxication can't be had, they have the methods of a *Dry Drunkenneſs* to ſerve inſtead thereof. Why? the Devil knowes that by *Drunkenneſs* he ſhall keep a ſure and a faſt hold of miſerable Men. We find in the Goſpel, that when the Devil was in poor Creatures, he threw them into the *Fire*, and into the *Water*. 'Tis frequently the condition of drunken Wretches, notwithſtanding that lying Proverb, *A drunken Man gets no harm*. Sometimes they are thrown into the *Fire*, and there they are *burned*. Several ſuch Inſtances have we lately ſeen; their Sin lay in the abuſe of Drinks that would *burn*, and they have themſelves *burnt* with a vengeance for it. Sometimes they are thrown into the *Water*, and there they are *drowned*; and one of them, not very long ago,

ago, so remarkably, as that it was in the *Hold* of a Vessel too; a most proper Disaster! For a *drunken* Man is but an Old *English* word for a *drowned* Man. The Devil sees that if he can make Men *drunk*, he can do what he will with them; they will then stick at nothing that he shall urge them to; as in the memorable History recited by *Lonicerus*.

We have a Drink that has been called *Kill-Devil*; but old Mr. *Wilson* truly said, it might rather be called, *Kill Men for the Devil*. It is indeed a thing that every day does *fill Men with the Devil*. Behold more to whom we may say, *Why hath Satan filled thine Heart?*

Fourthly, The *Devil* has filled the Heart, when *Falshood* is filling of it. It is the word of Truth in *John* 8. 44. *The Devil is a Lyar, and the Father of it.* Even so, *The Devil is a Lyar, and the filler of such.* There are those that will tell a Lye for the sake of some secular trivial advantage; perhaps in Buying and Selling they will multiply *Lies* to serve their little Bargains. This renders Men like our *Ananias* here; when the Man was catched in a *Cheat*, sayes the Apostle, *Man, Satan has been filling that false Heart of thine.* There are those will *belye* their Neighbours; that will defame, reproach, and either make or spread very *false* Reports about the Country. 'Tis a *Diabolism* which they are herein guilty of. This is to be just like the *Devil*, who uses to slander the Children of Men before the Lord. We read in the Scripture, about, *A City full of Lyes*; and you may be sure it was then, *A City full of Devils* too.

When

When the People of God were honestly employed about the *Church-work*, which the King had hitherto countenanced, a company of ill-advised Men sent home their lying *Addresses*, *Petitions* and *Letters* against them to obstruct them in it; their words were, *Thy Servants, the Men on this side the water*, inform, *That they are building a rebellious and a bad City; and if the City be built, it will endamage the Revenue of the Kings.* Who do you suppose inspired those *false Libellers*? Doubtless, it must be that Spirit who is called, *The accuser of the Brethren.*

Moreover, There are those that are very false in their *Promises*; they'll promise you to do a *Work*, or pay a *Debt*, most certainly within such a time; but no heed is to be given unto any thing they say; 'tis affirmed, that some *Church-Members* are very scandalous for this Iniquity. Indeed! But let them for all their high Profession, hear who their *Leader* is. In this thing they follow the *Devil*, who made once a large *promise* to our Saviour, *All this will I do for thee*; but never was a syllable of it like to be performed. These People serve their Neighbours just as the *Devils* do the *Witches*, in the *promises* that they make unto them, Who do you think *fills* them all the while?

Finally, There are those that are very false in their *pretences* too; they'll speak very fair, and be your most *Humble Servants*; but at the same time the Rule you must have in treating with them, is, *When they speak fair, believe them not, for there are seven abominations in their Hearts*; and for that very cause we may add,

There

There are ſeven Devils in thoſe Hearts of theſe. A *Judas* comes and cringes, and kiſſes, and complements, and 't is *hail Maſter!* and the bottom of all is, to *betray* that *Maſter*; but we are told firſt, *The Devil entered into the Heart of him.* I have then ſhown you the viſage of more People, to whom we may ſay, *Why hath Satan filled thy Heart?*

Fifthly, When the *Mouth* is full of the *Devil*, the *Heart* cannot but be ſo too. It is ſaid in *Matth.* 12. 34. *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh.* Would we underſtand what the *Heart* is *filled* with? it will be ſeen at the *Mouth.* A *ſur* and a *filth* upon the *Tongue* will diſcover the inward *Fevers* of the Soul. We read concerning, *A Tongue ſet on fire of Hell.* There are *Tongues* that are full of Railing, full of Curſing, full of Ribaldry and Obſcenity: Why, 'tis the *Devil* that ſets *Fire* to thoſe outragious *Tongues*; but if their *Hearts* had not firſt been full of the Devil, there would not be ſo much *Hell* belch'd out of their *Mouths.* There are Tongues that will tear and rend the Bleſſed Name of God, with whole volleyes of cruel *Oaths*; 'tis becauſe they are charged full of the *Devil*, that they go off at ſuch a furious rate. And the ſame *Tongues* uſually have the Name of the *Devil* into all affairs; if any thing be amiſs, they ſay, *What? the Devil ails it?* I Anſwer them, 'Tis the *Devil* that *ails you*, the thing is otherwiſe well enough: If any thing vex them, they wiſh, *The Devil take it!* I Anſwer them, The Devil has *taken you* already, or you had never ſpoken ſo. Here are yet

others

others to whom we say, *Why hath Satan filled thine heart?*

Sixthly. When the Man is full of *mischief*, you may be sure the Heart is full of the *Devil*. It was a smart speech of the Apostle to a Man that would have hindered another from turning unto God, in *Acts* 13. 10. *O full of all mischief, thou child of the devil.* Truly such a *Child of the Devil* must needs be *full of the Devil*. There are those that have an extream delight in doing *mischief* to those that are about them; those that love to *sow discords*, to *make brangles*, to *multiply disorders*; it is a *sport* unto them to imbroil Humane Affairs; but these *Fools* are the *Tools* of the Devil in such things as these. Above all, there are those that stab and wound the *Souls* of their unhappy Neighbours; that *poyson* the Souls of their Neighbours with Prejudices against the Truths, and the Ways, and the Servants of the Living God; that *entice* the Souls of their Neighbours into those companies and practices, which will infallibly undo them for ever. These *Agents* of the Devil can't be empty of him. The Devil is the chief *Tempter* of the World; all you little *Tempters* are but his under-Officers; and it is *he* that *fills* you and *fits* you for that piece of mischief. But some there are that advance to such a measure of mischief, as to attempt no less than the very *murder* of themselves. When persons fall into *discontent*, and are not able to bear the *sorrows* or *terrors* of their Souls; or when they have *provoked God* by some extraordinary Impieties and Iniquities, it is no rare thing for them to

fall thus far into the *Devils* hands. *Self-murder* is a prodigious piece of *ſelf-miſchief*; and it is therewithal, a ſort of *Revenge* upon the Almighty God himſelf. None but an Heart *full* of the Devil will attempt ſuch a nefandous wickedneſs: Indeed you may ſee much of the *Devil* in it, by the aſſiſtance which the *Devil* himſelf gives to many unnatural *ſelf-executions*; one would think it impoſſible to kill a Man by ſuch means as many wretched Creatures kill themſelves withal; but when once they have begun, the Devil, who is the *Angel of Death*, immediately makes them uncapable to deſiſt. Behold, thoſe monſters to whom it might be ſaid, *Why hath Satan filled thine heart?*

Laſtly, *Malignity*, eſpecially when accompanied with *Apoſtacy*, proclaims that the *Devil* has *filled* the Heart of a miſerable Sinner. The Apoſtle acquaints us in *Eph.* 4. 26, 27. that if we do but let a little *anger* lye in our Hearts, we *give place to the Devil*; we give the Devil a *lodging* there. What then is done by thoſe that have *hatred* and *malice* continually broiling in their Hearts? 'Tis the crime of many; and they beſtow the moſt of their *hatred* and *malice* upon thoſe things that have moſt of God appearing in them. They can't endure *Holineſs*, nor thoſe Principles, nor thoſe Miniſters, that would promote much of *Holineſs* in the World. This is not becauſe the *Devil* is a ſtranger to the Hearts of thoſe evil Men. Said the Devil once unto our Lord, *What have I to do with thee, thou holy one!* The Devil is in the Hearts of Men, when they can't bear what has a ſtamp of

of *Holineſs* upon it; but make their clamours and outcries thereupon immediately. A Man that made ſome Figure once, paſſing a Cenſure upon an Holy Perſon, had ſo little Grace and Wit, as to ſay, *That Man is ſo like to God, that I cannot endure him.* There ſpoke now a *Devil incarnate.* Alas, there are Men that can't endure what has much of God and *Holineſs* attending of it; a *Government* that ſhall be all for *Holineſs*, a *Miniſtry* that ſhall be all for *Holineſs*, is a terrible eye-ſore to theſe evil Men. Why, 'tis a black Mark of *the Devil in the heart*, which thoſe people wear upon them. But it is more dreadfully *ſymptomatical*, if theſe have heretofore been better affected and inclined. The Devil is the firſt and chief *Apoſtate* in the World; and it's his being in their Hearts that renders others herein like unto him. It is a deſcription of ſuch *Apoſtates* in *Matth.* 12. 45. *The unclean ſpirit goes and takes with himſelf ſeven other ſpirits more wicked than himſelf, and they enter in and dwell there.* Many a Man that once had his Heart ſo *ſwept*, as that he could *weep* at a Sermon, and he had a great kindneſs for the Churches of God; this Man loſes all the favours of Heaven that once were upon the Soul of him; he comes to deſpiſe and reproach the *Scriptures*; to ſit and flout and ſcoff in the moſt *ſerious Ordinances*, to entertain a deſperate *antipathy* againſt what is *holy, and juſt, and good.* Now the *Devil* is gone into the Heart of that Man, with *ſeven* more of his Crue, to *dwell* there for ever. Go toll the *paſſing Bell* for the Soul of that Man; there is hardly any hope of his recovery.

If any one of all these Characters be found upon any of us, let them take the *warning*, which thereupon belongs unto them: Let them know, that they are going on to all manner of *wickedness* and *misery*. Stop, Sinner, stop; O make a stand. What can you think will become of you, if you permit the Devil to *fill* you any more? It must at last come to that in *Matth.* 25. 41. *Depart into everlasting fire with him.* But,

III. Let us take some *Counsels* to prevent *Satan* from filling of our Hearts by his Temptations.

We may not *permit* the Devil to fill us: But what shall we do to *prevent* his doing so?

There are these *Directions* to be follow'd.

First, Our *flying* from the Devil, will prevent his *filling* of us. That is to say, let us get out of our Natural, Unconverted, Unrenewed Estate, by turning to God in Christ. While Men are *unregenerate*, they are as in *Act.* 26. 18. *under the power of Satan.* The Devil is an Absolute *Lord* over the Hearts of them that are not born again; he Rules and Reigns like a Bloody *Tyrant*, in those poor Hearts, without all controul. Come then, shake off the *yokes* of that Hellish Tyrant, by entering into Covenant with God in Christ; and say sincerely, as in *Isa.* 26. 13. *O Lord our God, other Lords besides thee have had dominion over us; but we will now make mention of thy Name alone.* Though you cannot

cannot Repent, you cannot Believe, of your ſelves; yet make ſome *eſſay* to *Repent* and *Believe*, in hopes that the Pity of the Moſt High may help you to go through with it. And when once you have in that way ſincerely given up your ſelves to God in Chriſt, the *Devil* will no more have ſuch an Intereſt in you as formerly; you will be none of *his*.

O that you might all thus get clear of the *Devils* Command! It is a thing that ſhould not be delayed at all. The Devil preſſes no *Temptation* more fervently and forceably than this; *Delay till to morrow*; *To Repent and Believe hereafter will be time enough*. 'Tis by this *procraſtination* that the Devil keeps poor Sinners in his unmerciful hands for ever. Sinners, you are to this day, *The captives of the mighty, and the prey of the terrible ones*; the worſt *Patroon* in *Algier* is an eaſie Matter in compariſon of that horrible one which you are continually ſerving of. Some of you know the Troubles of a Slavery to wicked *Frenchmen* or *Spaniards*; and I ſuppoſe, would be loth to be in it again: But you are in a more diſmal Vaſſalage, till you are brought home to God. May all young People be particularly admoniſhed againſt all delays of turning to the Lord. It will be an eaſier thing for you *now* to ſhake off the Chains of the Devil upon you, than it will be afterwards. We read of one, from whom it was an hard thing to get the Devil out; and what was the Reaſon of it? We read in *Mark* 9. 21. *How long ago is it ſince this came unto him? And he ſaid, of a child.* Alas, there is not one unrege-

nerate *Child* in this Aſſembly, but it may be ſaid, *Satan has filled the Heart of that Child.* But if you would *now* turn from all Sin, while you are *Children*, it will be unſpeakably leſs troubleſome to get out of the Devils clutches, than it can be afterwards. Let all *young* People then cry to God immediately, that he would beſtow a Regeneration on them. *David* reſcues *Lambs* from the *Lion.* And yet let not the oldeſt among us all deſpair of his deliverance, if he now cry to Heaven for it. One that had been ſeized by a wild Beaſt, cryed out, *Help, help, I am yet alive!* Are you yet *alive?* It is not then too late for you to be ſaved from the Jaws of the *Devil*, which is carrying of your Souls away.

Secondly, Our *fighting* with the Devil will prevent his *filling* of us. This has the Apoſtle ſaid unto us in *Jam.* 4. 7. *Reſiſt the devil, and he will flee from you.* When the Devil follows us, with any of his Temptations, reject them as the Pious *Joſeph* did, *How ſhall I do this wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God?*

The way to encounter any Temptations of the Devil, is to oppoſe the *Word* of God unto them. The Advice proper for us, is that in *Eph.* 6. 17. *Take the ſword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.* Behold, a *Sword* for us to combate and conquer all the Devils in Hell withal; I may ſay of that Sword, as *David* of *Goliahs, There is none like it.* When the Devil aſſaulted our Saviour with his Temptations, he replyed upon him, *It is written! It is written!* Thus, when the Devil with his Temptations, would

would get into our Hearts, let us tell him what is *written* in the Commandments, the Promiſes, the Threatnings of the Bleſſed God. *Belſhazzar* was not more frighted at the *Hand writing* on the *Wall*, than the Devil is at what is *written* in the Word of God, when 'tis laid before him. I remember, *Athanaſius*, I think 'tis, reports, that in his time, the Devils in ſome that were poſſeſſed, could not bear to hear that Scripture in *Pſal.* 68. 1. *Let God ariſe, let his enemies be ſcattered.* Why, the *whole Bible* is of a like efficacy to drive the Devil from us. Learn to fence with a *Text of Scripture*, againſt all the Paſſes which the Devil is making at us; he'll not be able to cloſe in with us, while we keep the Point of this *two edged Sword* upon him. This is that *ſtrong Sword of the Lord*, which will *plague Leviathan the croſked Serpent, and ſlay the Dragon that is in the Sea.*

Thirdly, We muſt *keep* our Hearts, if we would not have the Devil to *fill* our Hearts. We have this among the Oracles of Wiſdom, in *Prov.* 4. 23. *Keep thy heart with all diligence.* It is by *watchfulneſs* that we beſt ſecure our Hearts from the Invaſions and Incroachments of a buſie Devil. We ſhould alwayes be *ſuſpicious*, leſt the Devil be circumventing of us with ſome of his Temptations; and we ſhould alwayes be as jealous about our own Hearts, as *Job* was about the Hearts of his unwary Children.

We ſhould keep a conſtant *guard* upon our ſelves; and be among thoſe *bleſſed* ones, of whom 'tis ſaid, *They fear always.* 'Twas ſaid

in *Matth.* 26. 41, *Watch, that ye enter not into temptation.* Even so, to be *watchful*, will keep *Temptation* from entering into us. I pray then, keep alwayes *awake*. 'Tis possible, that some of you are in circumstances peculiarly exposing of you to Temptations. You have laid aside something of that *intimate Communion* with God, which you have heretofore been used unto; you are grown *formal*, *sleighty*, *weary* in your Devotions; you are plunged over Head and Ears into the *delights*, or *hurries*, or *troubles* of the World; I must now cry to you, as 'twas cryed unto *Sampson* of old, *The Philistines are upon thee, awake.* The Devil will quickly fill that Heart of thine, if thou dost not awake, so as to keep it with more carefulness and exactness.

I'll mention to you the most likely contrivance and expedient for the keeping of our Hearts; 'tis that in *Phil.* 4. 7. *The peace of God shall keep your hearts, through Christ Jesus.* The *Greek* word alludes unto a Garrison. Be sure to maintain your *Peace* with God, and renew it presently, upon the least eclipse or breaking of it. Let there also be always living in your Souls, a sense of the *Love of God in Christ Jesus*, and see that Love, feel that Love, live upon that Love; this will be such a *Garrison* in your Hearts, that no Devil will find room for his Temptations there; this *Garrison* will Gloriously defend you from the Incursions of the Devil.

Lastly, If our Hearts were *full* of what is contrary to the *Devil*, it would hinder him from filling of them.

As

As now, let the Heart be full of *Heaven*, and it won't be full of *Satan*. It is an expreſſion in *Eph.* 3. 19. *Be filled with all the fulneſs of God.* Let us be *filled* with many Thoughts on God, and for God; be *fill'd* with apprehenſions of God, and with reſolutions for God; be *filled* with Meditations about the *Fulneſs* and Glory and Beauty that is in the Almighty God. An Heart ſo taken up with God, can't afford any corner for the Devil to be *filling* of. The deſcription of *Barnabas* will now belong unto us, in *Acts* 11. 24. *A good man, and full of the Holy Spirit.* It is not the *Evil Spirit*, but the *Holy Spirit* which *fills* the Heart of ſuch a Man; he becomes a *Temple* to the *Holy Spirit* of God, and if the Devil dare to moleſt his Heart with vile Temptations, this *Holy Spirit* ſoon drives him out of doors again.

Finally, Would we have an Heart not full of *Satan*? Then be ſure that we have an Heart full of *Prayer*. When we have never ſo well *armed* our ſelves againſt the Devil, and his *Temptations*, yet we are after all to be as in *Eph.* 6. 18. *Praying always with all prayer.* He that would be little in *Temptation*, let him be much in *Supplication*. The *Devil* is not able to ſtay where much *Prayer* is going up unto God continually. In the Houſe of a Famous *French* Miniſter, after the Devil had made never ſo much diſturbance, yet when they were going to Prayer, he would ſay, *Now you are going to Prayer, I muſt be gone!* Truly, we make our Hearts too hot for the Devil, if *Prayer* be always abounding with us. When the Soldiers of

of *Gideon* made a shout, the *Midianitish Armies* fled before it. All the Armies of Hell will fall and run at the *voice* of our fervent *Prayers*. Those two things are joyn'd in *Jam.* 4. 7, 8. *Resist the Devil; Draw nigh to God.* No posture are we so like to beat the Devil in, as by being on our *Knees*. If the Devils *Tempting* don't make us leave *Praying*, our *Praying* will shortly make him leave *Tempting*. They that went unto the Lord Jesus of old, had the Devil fetched out of their *Friends*; let us go to the Lord Jesus, that the Devil may not get into our *Hearts*. By our Prayers, let us resign and commit our selves to the *conduct* of God, and call in his *help* against all the annoyances of the wicked one. Although the Devil do strive never so much to *fill* our Hearts, we shall by experience find what the Psalmist said, v. *Psalm* 56. 9. *When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back; this I know, inasmuch as God is for me.*

The

The Dumb-Devil cast out:

OR,

The Horrible Sin of a Prayerless Life Discovered.

PSAL. liii. 4.

They have not called upon God.

'TIS an Observation which has been sometimes made for the incouragement of serious Devotions, *That either Praying will make Men leave Sinning, or Sinning will make Men leave Praying.* That there is an *excess* of *Sinning* among us, is a thing for which we have both God and Man testifying against us; 'tis that which particularly awakens the Messengers of Heaven to *cry aloud, and not spare, but lift up our voice like a trumpet.* And a *defect* of *Praying* among us, is doubtless to be assigned as one

one cauſe of our multiplyed abominations; 'tis not only *it ſelf* an inexcuſable Fault, but alſo 'tis the *original* of thoſe many other Crimes which we are expoſed unto the Vengeance of Heaven by. A witneſs is then to be born againſt the *Prayerleſs* Lives of too many in this place; and this Text is therefore now read unto you, that you may ſee the Holy Spirit of God ſtigmatizing all Prayerleſs People as, *The workers of iniquity.*

The Pſalm, in which we find our Text, is a *ſecond Edition* of the Fourteenth Pſalm, with ſome little Variations and Alterations which do but aſſiſt the Expoſition of them both. *David* probably found a new occaſion to revive ſome of his former Thoughts, and the Inſpired *Compiler* of the Pſalms, had ſuch a reverence for the Inſpired *Compoſer* of them, as not to loſe the leaſt Fragment of his Holy Writings. Moreover, the *ſubject* handled in theſe two Pſalms, is of ſo much Importance, and yet ſo little Regarded or Credited in the World, that a *Repetition* of it is far from inconvenient; it is the horrible diſorder and corruption of Mankind, by *Original Sin*, that is here treated of; and we know, not only that the old *Pagans* were obſtinately inſenſible of this depravation, but alſo, that among pretended *Chriſtians*, the Antient *Pelagians*, and the Modern *Arminians*, have moſt venomouſly oppoſed the *True Faith* about it, while *themſelves* have given an Inſtance to confirm what they have oppoſed.

Our Context contains the deſcription of a *Fool*; now from the Language of *Solomon*, who in

in his Preaching and Writing made a great Imitation of his *Father*, we may learn, that by a *Fool* is meant a *Sinner*; for every *Sinner* is indeed a most notorious and egregious *Fool*. A word of the same kindred with what is used here, signifies, *A carcase*; indeed a *Sinner* is a *dead Man*, and he has but the *Carcase* of a Man that is without Religion. The Apostle *Paul* in his famous Commentary upon this Portion of Scripture, has very justly applyed the Characters here given, unto all the Children of Men in their Natural Estate. But a more special reference may herein be had unto the bloody Persecutors of the Church; perhaps the Courtiers of that bloody Tyrant *Saul*; or, if some Expressions in the Psalm agree not so well to such a time, there are who think that the Persecution by *Nebuchadnezzar* is in the Fourteenth Psalm pointed at; and the Persecution of *Antiochus*, in this fifty third.

The great Article in the description of such woful Sinners is, their *Atheism*; 'tis possible, they dare not *say* with their *Mouths*, *There is no God*: Humane Society would not endure an Assertion so criminal and odious; and the most Brutish Atheist will, as *Calvin* relates of one in a sudden distress, cry out, *O God, help me!* Nor can they *think* with their *Hearts*, *There is no God*: No, 'tis ingraven there with indelible Impressions; I cannot find that all Histories report of more than twenty persons that pretended unto perfect Atheism; yea, I suppose I may affirm, *There never was a Man, who had a firm and long perswasion, that there was no God, without*

without vehement suspicions to the contrary. But they say in their *Hearts, There is no God*; it is but a Practical Atheism, that they are guilty of; and this Verse gives us two demonstrations of it; they are both *injurious* to Men, and *impious* to God.

1. *They eat up the People of God as they eat bread.* They destroy the People of God with *open mouth*; and they do it with as little *remorse*, they do it with as much *fury* and as much *delight*, as they can eat a meal when they are hungry. Such *Canibals* do the People of God often meet withal!

2. *They have not called upon God.* They live without *Prayer* from day to day. *Prayer* is first a matter of meer *form*, and it quickly becomes a matter of pure *scorn* to such ungodly wretches.

You may behold in this Verse; First, *A question* by way of *Complaint*: *Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge, who eat up my people as they eat bread?* It is the note of one, that the Psalmist here does not so much *quærere* as *queri*; not so much *inquire* as *complain*. A *wicked folly* is here supposed in all the Persecutors of the Church. But wherein does that appear? Why, Secondly, We have an Answer hereunto, *They have not called upon God.* q. d. This puts it out of doubt, that they are the *workers* of *iniquity* which *have no knowledge in them.* In the former mention of this passage, the Name of *Jehovah* was used, which represents God as the Author of *Being*; in this 'tis the Name of *Elohim*, which represents God as the Author of *Judgment*. It intimates that they who *call not upon God*,

God, forget either that they had their *Being*, or shall have their *Judgment* from him.

The Doctrine which lies before us, is,

That it is a wicked Folly to live without calling upon the Name of God.

Some so render the Clauses here; *When they eat Bread, they call not upon the Lord*; and it is truly a *wicked folly* to eat after such a Beastly fashion: But that comprehends not all that is to be considered here. Take two Propositions.

PROP. I.

A true *Prayer* is a calling upon God in Christ, for Mercy to be in his *time*, and *way*, and *measure* bestowed upon us.

First, For the *Object* of Prayer, it is, *God in Christ*. It is a vile, a detestable, an execrable *Idolatry* to pray unto any other besides the Eternal God. For to *pray*, is to repair unto the *first cause*, for help in our difficulties. An Holy *Daniel*, with his three worthy *Companions*, bravely chose to undergo very terrible Deaths, rather than to commit that Iniquity. It is an Oracle which the chief Devil of Hell once trembled at, in *Matth.* 4. 10. *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* None but the *Hearer* of Prayer can without infinite absurdity be made the *Object* of Prayer. The *Hearer* of Prayer must needs be an

an *Omnipresent* one; he must be able to perceive millions of persons in millions of places, at once pouring out their Groans unto him. And the *Hearer* of Prayer must needs be an *Omnipotent* one; he must be able to gratifie and accomplish the vast wishes of Immortal Souls, which inlarge themselves like the very Heavens. Now none besides the Lord our God, is thus *Omnipresent* and *Omnipotent*; it is his Title in *Psal.* 65. 2. *O thou that hearest prayer.* But the great God may not be addressed by sinful Men, but in, and by, and through Jesus Christ; our Blessed Jesus has told us in *John* 14. 6. *I am the way, none comes to the Father, but by me.* 'Tis through a *Mediator* that God will be conversed withal; and let Popery teach what it will, *There is but one Mediator for us, even the Man Christ Jesus.* As *Joseph* said unto those in *Gen.* 43. 5. *You shall not see my face, except your brother be with you*; so does our God say unto us, *You shall not seek my face unless you bring your Saviour with you.* When we pray, it must be with an Eye to the *satisfaction* of the Lord Jesus Christ. As *Jonah* said in his Prayer, in *Jon.* 2. 4. *I will look toward thy holy temple*; thus in our Prayers, we must exercise a dependance on the Lord Jesus Christ, the Antitype of the Temple, for our acceptance with the Father. And when we pray, it must be with an eye to the *intercession* of the Lord Jesus Christ; that is, the Incense which we must have our Prayers perfumed withal, that they may not be ungrateful unto God; as we read in *Rev.* 8. 4. *The smoke of the*

the incenſe which came with the prayers of the Saints, aſcended up before God, out of the Angels hands.

Secondly, For the *Nature* of Prayer, 'tis a *calling upon God.* A *Deſire* is that in which begins the Formation of a *Prayer*; but the buſineſs of *Prayer* is to preſent our *Deſire* before the Almighty God; the Apoſtle calls *Prayer*, in *Phil.* 4. 6. *A making known of our requeſts unto God.* Sometimes *Prayer* only forms theſe Requeſts into *Thoughts*; thus that Invitation to *Prayer*, in *Lam.* 3. 41. *Let us lift up our hearts unto God in the heavens.* There are in it the ſecret outgoings of the *Will* unto God for his Bleſſing, and perhaps *unutterable groans.* Sometimes *Prayer* alſo forms the Requeſts into *Words*; as we are adviſed in *Hoſ.* 14. 1. *Take to your ſelves words.* The Arrowes are ſhot up to Heaven by the Bow of the *Tongue.* But in what manner does a Right Prayer preſent our *Deſires* unto God? It is with a *calling* upon him. *Prayer* is thus deciphered in *Acts* 7. 59 'tis, *A Calling.* And the Almighty God is therein *call'd* upon. This is a term uſed for *Prayer*, I think, more than twenty times in the Book of God. And hence alſo, *Prayer* is denominated very frequently, *A crying to the Lord*; thus we read about, *The cry of the Righteous*; and it is ſaid in *Pſal.* 34. 6. *This poor man cryed unto the Lord.* This is the difference between *right Prayer*, and what cometh ſhort of it. In falſe Prayers Men *complement*, but in Right ones, they *clamour.* A *Call* is an earneſt Requeſt; a *Call* is a Requeſt with much fervency, with ſome agony, and coming

from a ſenſe of deep diſtreſs. When a Man truly *Prayes*, he does not *ſport* in it, or *ſcoff* in it; but according to that in *Jam.* 5. 17. *He prayes in Prayer.* There is a *ſtriving in Prayer*, there is a *wreſtling in Prayer*, there is a *labouring Prayer*, where Prayer is duely made. Indeed the *Call* of a Right Prayer is not ſo much in the *Voice* of it, as in the *Grace* of it. We read not that *Moſes* audibly uttered a ſyllable, when yet the Lord ſaid in *Exod.* 14. 15. *Wherefore cryeſt thou unto me?* Warm and ſtrong Affections make a *cry* in that thing which is worthy to be called, *A Prayer*; 'tis a thing beyond meer *Lip-labour* or *Lung-labour*; 'tis not the meer *ſaying of Prayers*, that is of any account with that God, who if he be not ſerved in *Spirit*, counts himſelf not ſerved in *Truth.*

Thirdly, For the *matter* of Prayer, it is, *Mercy to be obtained as the Lord ſhall pleaſe.* What is to be the Petition of our Prayers? In ſhort, it is that in *Pſal.* 51. 1. *Have mercy upon me, O God.* And the particular *Mercies* which our Prayers muſt inſiſt upon, are thoſe which the Word of God recommends unto us. We are told in 1 *John* 5. 14. *If we ask any thing according to the will of God, he heareth us.* Our Prayers muſt be alwayes anſwerable to the *revealed Will* of God; the Will of Gods *Precept* hath ſet the bounds of our Prayers, and ſaid, *Hitherto ſhall ye go, and no further.* Of every *command* there, it ſhould be our Prayer, *Lord, help me to keep it*; of every Promiſe, *Lord, give me to find it*; of every Threatning, *Lord, give me to ſhun it*: In ſhort, The *Lords Prayer* is

is to be the *Directory* of all *our Prayers*. But our Prayers must also be with a submission to the *secret Will* of God; the *time*, and *way*, and *measure* of Mercies, it must be left unto the Will of Gods *purpose* to order that. Our Language in our Prayer should be, *Let God have mercy on me when he will; it is not for me to know the time:* Our Language is to be, *Let God have mercy on me, how he will: his way is alwayes best*: It is to be, *Let God proportion his mercy to me, according to his pleasure; I may not limit the holy one of Israel.* This is a true Prayer. But now,

PROP. II.

It is a *wicked folly* to live without such Prayer unto the Eternal God. Now to evince this, let these things be pondered.

First, To live without *Prayer* is a piece of curled *Atheism*; no easier a Name than *that* is to be put upon it. He that lives without Prayer, denies or disputes the very *Being* of a God. Thus we find concerning the Atheist, in *Psal.* 14. 1. *He hath said in his heart, there is no God*; and it quickly follows, *They call not upon the Lord.* If we grant this, That *God* is, the next thing to be granted, is, *He is diligently to be sought unto.* The Apostle in *Heb.* 11. 6. makes those two Principles to stand as immovable and inseparable as the very Pillars of Heaven. To live without *Prayer*, is to live as if there were no Soul, no Hell, no God. It

is said in *Psal.* 10. 4. *The wicked will not seek after God; God is not in all his thoughts:* Or, as it may be rendered, *All his thoughts are, that there is no God.* He that withholds this piece of *Natural Worship* from God, e'en sayes, *I will have no God at all.* But what a *wicked Folly* is this? 'Tis an Impiety beyond what the blackest and the fiercest of all the Devils in Hell ever yet arrived unto. All the Works both of *Creation* and *Providence*, are every one of them the *Heralds of a Deity*; the Atheist has every motion in the Universe, together with the *consent of Nations*, to cry out upon him; and there is nothing in the World, but what serves to confound that *Leviathan.*

Secondly, To *live without Prayer* is to disobey and contradict the *Command* of the Great God. The God of Heaven is the Governour of the World; he is the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the Most High Monarch over all; and he has required this Homage from all the Children of Men, *That we pray unto him.* 'Tis the Edict of Heaven in 1 *Thess.* 5. 17. *Pray without ceasing.* This is indeed a main thing required in the *First Commandment* of the Law; when 'tis said, *Thou shalt have the Lord for thy God*, a main thing therein intended is, *Thou shalt make thy Prayers unto the God of Heaven.* 'Tis a thing which the Command of God has, without exception or exemption, enjoined upon all the World. As for *good* Men; our Lord said unto his Disciples, in *Matth.* 6. 9. *Pray ye.* As for *ill* Men too; 'twas said unto such an one, in *Acts* 8. 22. *Pray to God.* Now 'tis a *wicked Folly*

Folly to rebel against the Voice of God. All his *Commandments* are *holy, and just, and good*; and it is a madness for us to dare his Righteous and his Terrible Vengeance, by speaking like those Miscreants of old, *As for the word spoken to us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hearken thereunto.*

Thirdly, What Man alive is there, who has not manifold *occasions* of *calling upon the Lord*? Poor Man is a depending sort of thing; he cannot subsist *of* and *from*, as he may not *for* himself. He cannot make a *shift* without God, and therefore 'tis a *wicked Folly* for him to live without *Prayer* unto God. It was the insolent speech of *Pilate*, in *John* 19. 10. *Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have power over thee?* But the Glorious God may speak after that rate unto every one of us: *What? Speakest thou not unto me? Shall not I have a Prayer from thee, when I have such power over thee? Knowest thou not, that in me thou livest, thou movest, thou hast thy Being. Knowest thou not that thou art every moment in danger of my Damning thee for thy Disobedience?* Truly every Soul of us, has many *Sins* to be pardoned, many *wants* to be supplyed, many *woes* to be deprecated; we are strangely stupid and sottish, 'tis a *dumb Devil* that has possession of us, if we go not unto God by Prayer in such unhappy circumstances.

Fourthly, There is no *Godly Man* that can live without *Prayer*, unto the God that made him. Sayes the Psalmist, in *Psal.* 32. 6. *Every one that is godly shall pray unto thee.* A *Godly* Man is alwayes

wayes a *praying* Man. A Man does no sooner begin to have a real impression of Godliness upon him, but it may be said of him, as it was of Repenting *Paul*, *Behold he prayes!* All Godly Men have a true *fear* of God; they are loth to provoke, loth to offend, unwilling to incense his Eternal Majesty. Hence it may be said of them, as in *Psal.* 145. 18, 19. *They call upon him in truth*, for *they fear him.* Again, all Godly Men have a true *Faith* in God; they realize unto themselves that *fullness*, and that *kindness*, which is in the Lord: Hence it may be said by them, as in *Psal.* 116. 10. *I have believed, therefore have I spoken*; *i. e.* I have prayed. Moreover, all Godly Men have a true *love* to God; a *communion* with him is the pleasure of their Souls; they are never so well as when they are in his *company*. Hence they can say after *David*, in *Psal.* 116. 1, 2. *I have loved the Lord, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.* Once more, All Godly Men have the *Spirit* of God, *he* has renewed them, *he* has sanctified them, *he* has possessed them as *Temples* for himself. Now 'tis said of him in *Zech.* 12. 10. *He is a Spirit of Supplication*; there is an abiding inclination to *Supplication*, in all that are acted and filled by the Spirit of God. Well then, you that *live without Prayer*, are but so many *ungodly* ones; you are altogether without the *Fear*, and without the *Faith*, and without the *Love*, and without the *Spirit* of God; by consequence then, 'tis a *wicked Folly* that has dominion over you,

Fifthly,

Fifthly, Very *great* and *good* things are to be obtained by our Prayers unto the Lord our God. It is the Promise of God in *Matth.* 7. 7. *Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find.* One of the Antients ingeniously compared *Prayer* unto a *Golden Chain*, one end of which is tyed unto the *Tongue* of *Man*, the other unto the *Ear* of *God*; by this *Chain* we may effectually pull down from Heaven all the Blessings that we are justly desirous of. Let us trade much in the Ship of *Prayer*, and in the Covenant of God we shall find settled an *Insuring Office* to secure us our Adventures. It has been said, *Est quædam Omnipotentia precum.* I pray, what is there that can't be done by *Prayer*? First for *great things*; why *Prayer!* it hath stopt the very Chariots of the Sun in the Firmament, the Prayer of *Joshua* did it. *Prayer*, it hath managed the Corks on the Bottles of Heaven; the Prayer of *Elijah* did it. *Prayer*, it hath made the *dead* themselves alive again; the Prayer of *Elisha* did it. *Prayer*, it hath muzzled the Mouths of ravenous *Lions*; thus did the Prayer of *Daniel*. *Prayer*, it hath made the *Fire* unable to burn; so did the Prayer of the three Worthies. *Prayer*, it hath made the strongest Bars of Prison-doors to fly before it; while the praying Saints were knocking at the Doors of Heaven for *Peters* liberty, *Peter* came knocking at the Door of the House in which they were assembled. About the successes of *Prayer*, I may say like the Apostle, *The time would fail me to mention them.* It as it were obtains a victory over the Almighty God him-

himself; you know what the Prayer of *Jacob*, and what the Prayer of *Moses* did. Such are the *great* things that may be done by *Prayer*; but let me also tell you a few of the *good* things that may be thereby acquired; I may indeed say of *Prayer*, as the Apostle sayes of *Piety*, *'Tis profitable for all things.* It is, as *Paul* speaks in *Heb.* 10. 22. *A drawing near to God*; it maintains a very near Communion between God and us; but what said the Psalmist, *It is good for me to draw near unto God.* In short, It is a Golden *Key* to unlock all the Treasures of an All-sufficient God. It was a sweet speech once of a person in distress, *I have no Friend, but I have a Prayer, and as long as I have a praying Heart, I am sure that my God will have an helping hand.* Particularly, would you have your *Souls* to be blessed in very deed? What sayes the Psalmist, in *Psal.* 69. 32. *Your heart shall live that seek God.* A praying Soul will be a *thriving* Soul; it will have its Graces kept in a continual exercise. There is an Island in the Mediterranean Sea, whereof they say, *The Sun will be sure to shine upon it, at least once every day throughout the year.* This is the happiness of a praying Soul; the *light of Gods countenance* will be upon it every day. And a praying Soul will be a *joyful* Soul; it will never want an *Hearts-ease* in its Afflictions. A Soul that being melted with grief is *poured out unto the Lord*, is in a ready way to be *no more sad.* A Famous Man being driven to his Knees by his Perplexities, had that chearing Message brought from Heaven to him, *Thou art a Man greatly beloved.* In brief, A praying

Soul

Soul shall be a saved Soul; we are assured in *Rom.* 10. 3. *Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.* Yet further, would you have your *Bodies*, your *Estates*, and all your *Affairs* under the perpetual *Blessings* of Heaven? Why, 'tis the proffer of our God unto us, in *Psal.* 91. 15. *He shall call upon me, and I will deliver him, and honour him, with long life will I satisfie him.* The Steward of *Abraham* thought that *Prayer* would not hinder, but procure a prosperous Journey for him. When *Saul* perceived how much *David* kept *Prayer* a going, he said, *Thou shalt do great things.* Finally, would you have rich Blessings to be showred from on high upon your Families? Truly you cannot lay up a better *portion* for your Children than a stock of *Prayers*; and a praying Man has before now been able to say, *This day have I obtained mercy for my self, and all of mine.* Yea, by being much in Prayer, we may like *Noah*, like *Job*, like *Daniel*, we may our selves be *publick Blessings*; we may be the *gapmen* of the places in which we live; we may *deliver Islands*, and be the Saviours of our Country. But what a *wicked Folly* must it be for us to deprive our selves of such inestimable benefits!

Lastly, The neglect of *Prayer* is that which will plunge the Souls of Men into intolerable and interminable *Miseries*. Know it for certain, That without *Prayer* you cannot be made partakers of those Divine Favours, without which, *It had been good for you that you had never been born.* God has indeed engaged all manner of Salvations for his chosen ones; but he has added

added in *Ezek.* 36. 37. *I will yet for this be inquired of to do it.* We must *inquire* of God, and *intreat* of God, or we may not hope for any thing that is truly comfortable. Yea, without *Prayer* 'tis impossible but we should perish among them that are *without God*, and *without Christ*, and *without Hope* in the World. A Man may pray after a sort, and yet be damned after all: Our Lord said unto his Disciples in *Matth.* 5. 20. *Except your righteousness exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; and yet the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* had their formal Prayers every day. But what will then become of them that never or seldom do *pray* at all? Hear, ye Prayerless ones, and be amazed at what I am going to read from the Infallible Word of the everliving God concerning you; in *Psal.* 9. 17. *They that forget God shall be turned into Hell.* I am sure, the Great God is horribly *forgotten* by all that follow him not with Dayly and Serious *Prayers*; now 'tis no less than *Hell* it self, and all the burning Brimstone, and smoking Torment of that formidable Pit, that belongs to such miserable ones. *Now consider of this, ye that forget God, lest he tear you to pieces, and there be none to deliver you.* 'Tis true, there will a day come, when the most Prayerless Monster upon Earth, shall pray with an incredible anguish of Soul. They that spend all their dayes like *swine*, and never give a *look* or a *cry* to God all their dayes, yet when the sharp Knife of Everlasting Vengeance is at last laid unto their Throats, they will then pierce the Clouds with Groans unto the

the Lord. Those abominable Miscreants that now dare call upon the *Devil* to *take* them, and upon *God* Almighty to *damn* them, will one day pray for *Salvation*, in the *Groans of a deadly wounded man*. But what a confusion shall all their *Prayers* then meet withal! When they come to a dying Hour, and their trembling Souls are upon their quivering Lips, dragging away into an astonishing Eternity; or, when they appear before the Judgment-Seat of God, and stand quaking there in expectation of their *Eternal Judgment*; they will doubtless then pray hard, like the Foolish Virgins, *Lord, Lord, open the doors of thy mercy to us*! But what will all those despairing Prayers avail? God will answer those Prayers only in fiery Thunders, and furious Rebukes, and reply upon them, *No, 'tis all too late: Go, depart from me, ye prayerless workers of iniquity*. And now, *judge, I pray you*; is it not a most *wicked Folly* for a Man to put himself into a condition thus deplorable!

APPLICATION.

All these Considerations do but put Stings into the *Reproof* that now belongs unto all that make no Conscience of *calling upon God*. But in dispensing of *Reproofs* we shall not cut, unless like *Nathan* of old we come to so much particularity, as to say, *Thou art the Man!* Let us therefore descend unto the several sorts of *Prayer*, which many People among us are to be *reproved* for the omission of. The Apostle bids us in *Eph.* 6. 18. *Pray with all prayer*. But alas, there

there are those who practice *no Prayer* at all, and multitudes there are, who in *some Prayer* are notoriously deficient.

First, It is matter of reprehension, that *secret Prayer* is not regarded by many of us. It is the *Command* of our Lord, in *Matth.* 6. 6. *Pray in thy closet*; and it was his own *custom* accordingly, *To depart into a solitary place*, that he might be *praying* there. But O how many of us are there that are Baptized, and professing People, and yet go from day to day, without any *secret Prayers* before the Lord. Many there are that make no stick at *sinning in secret*, though the Eye of the Great God be upon all their cursed *Effeminacies* there; but as to *Praying in secret*, they do nothing at it. Hear this, ye giddy young people that know your selves guilty here: The God of Heaven hath often enough seen your *secret pranks*; but O when did he hear any of your *secret Prayers* unto him? There are some hundreds of persons in this Congregation; if the Angels of God that are probably now throng'd in amongst us, were now to make a publick discovery, *Who of all the Hearers is come to the Meeting, without any secret Prayer this Morning before they came?* Are there not some scores that might be pointed out? Let me tell you then, that you are worse than *Balaam* himself; of whom we are told in *Numb.* 23. 3. *He went alone to seek the Lord.* You have *secret Sins* to be confessed; but where are your *secret Prayers*, to bewail them all? Have you not your *Temptations* and *Vexations* that are also *secret*? Why, by these your *secret*

prayers

prayers are called for. It may prove a perillous and a pernicious thing, to omit but one *secret prayer*; it was bitterly bewailed by *Origen* of old, that the day whereon he fell into the foul scandal that cost him such an Ocean of Tears and Shame, was a day wherein *secret Prayer* had been passed over with him. Sayes our Lord, *Pray to thy Father which is in secret*: It seems they who duely *pray in secret* may call God their *Father*; did the Lord often see you, like *Nathanael*, under the Fig tree, he would say of you, as in *John* 1. 47. *Behold, an Israelite indeed!* But alas, he rarely sees you there. The *secret Prayers* of *Jacob* in the Field, preserved all that belonged unto him; the *secret prayers* of *Nehemiah* carried on all his weighty Businesses at the Court; the *secret Prayers* of *Hannath* begg'd of God but for *one Son*, and he gave her six times as much as she asked of him; the *secret prayers* of *Jeremiah* prevented his falling as a Sacrifice to unreasonable Men; and the *secret prayers* of *Peter* in the Belcony, fetched into his holy Soul, as much of Heaven as ever he could hold. But these are things which you are meer strangers unto: O that you were sensible of the *wicked Folly* in your being so!

Secondly, 'Tis matter of reprehension, that *private Prayer* is not attended by many of us. The Apostle sayes to *Masters* of Families in *Col.* 4. 2. *Continue in prayer*; alluding to the *continual offering* under the Law of old. But how many *Masters* do rob God of this *Daily Sacrifice*? They do not bring it both *Morning* and *Evening* to him. They pretend they have no

no *time* to *pray* with their Families; but they can find a *time* to *eat*, *sleep* and *smoke* with them; and they ponder not, *What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?* They pretend they want *utterance* and *confidence* to pray with their Families; but would they plead this, if they were like *Daniel*, to suffer Death for leaving undone that which *Daniel* did? They forget the Word of the Lord Jesus, *Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed.* And the Prayerless Masters of *Vessels* as well as of *Houses*, are deeply concerned in this Admonition. Vain Men, how little are you like *Joshua*, who resolved in *chap* 24. 15. *As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.* Were there much *Prayer* constantly going in your Houses, God would bless them, as he did the House of *Obed-edom*, when the Ark was there. If you, and the *two or three* in your Family, would *agree on Earth* in Prayer to God *in Heaven*, you might have any thing to be *done* for you. But now, thy *Prayerless* Family is no better than a *Pagan* Family: and that fearful Thunderbolt of Death now falls upon it, in *Jer.* 10. 25. *O Lord, pour out thy fury on the Families that call not on thy Name.* It seems, the Lord Jesus Christ is not the *Advocate*, but the *Accuser* of such a Family; and the *Prayerless House* must look to have none other than the *flying Roll* of Curses entring thereinto. Thy Family is the very Suburbs of Hell; a Man had better live in a *prison*, in a *Dungeon*, than in such a Family! Such Families bring in a Deluge of Disorder upon the Town and Land,

and

and set *Fire* to the Dwellings in which they live. And Man, what will become of thy poor *Children* and *Servants* in another World? Will they not with bitter execrations cry out upon thee, *O why did you never teach me to pray by your Example? 'Tis your Prayerless House that has plunged me into this fiery Hell for ever.* I beseech you then, that this *wicked Folly* be repented of!

Thirdly, 'Tis matter of lamentation, that *solemn prayer* is no more usual with us. Not only do many very contentedly absent themselves from the *whole*, or at least, from a *part* of the *publick prayers*, but also, *Prayer* with *Fasting* is of too little improvement with us. We may make that confession in *Dan.* 9. 13. *All this evil is come upon us, yet have we not made our prayer before the Lord our God.* How backward have we been to *Fasting* under our complicated Iniquities and Calamities? and when we do *Fast*, is it with *such a Fast as the Lord has chosen?* Do not we *Fast* with our *Ornaments* upon us? Or without any *Affliction* in our *Abstinence?* And how little *Fasting* is there of Christians in *retirements* before the Lord? *Nehemiah* would not undertake a weighty matter, before he had spent a *whole day* in a retired Fellowship with God. But how common is it for us to change our *Conditions*, to begin our *Voyages*, to approach our *Sacraments*, and do many more such important things, without such preparations? This is *utterly a fault among us.*

Fourthly,

Fourthly, It were well if we were more frequent and more serious in our *Ejaculatory Prayers*. These are a sort of *prayers* which our Blessed Jesus was much used unto; and we read of a great Man in *Neh.* 2. 4. that he would not answer a Question of any Concernment, without such a *prayer*. Indeed, there are profane *Ejaculations* proceeding from the mouths of many; with very frothy frames, they lard all their Discourses with an, *O Lord*, and *O Lord, bless me!* A common Swearer is but the Elder Brother of them who thus *take the Name of God in vain*. But instead thereof, we should be often sending up our Ejaculatory Prayers, both *Hosannahs* and *Hallelujahs*, both *Petitions* and *Thanksgivings*, from our affected Souls unto the Lord. A besieged City have before now tyed their Letters unto Arrows, and shot them over the Heads of their *Adversaries*, into the Hands of their *Auxiliaries*. Thus, when we are besieged and beset never so much with the incumbrances of the World, yet we should be often in a Day lifting up our Hearts unto *God who dwelleth in the Heavens*. But how few are there that thus keep in their Souls a *continual Feast*? As we are walking the Streets with our Minds quite empty of all other things, how rarely have we any devout *Ejaculations* in them, for a Blessing on themselves, or on them that are before our Eyes? Yea, when the Hearers of our Lord heard him preach about the *Bread of Life*, they presently annexed an *Ejaculation* thereunto, *Lord, Give us this Bread*; but how few

few Ejaculations has any among us made, since the Sermon this day began? This is also one of our miscarriages. Now let us take the *Reproofs* of God; let our *Prayers* become very vigorous; let us be much in the *Mount*, with our Hands up-lifted there: O tremble at being found among the *workers of iniquity*, that *have no knowledge* in them.

The Stage-player unmasked:

OR,

The Signs and Woes of a Wretched Hypocrite.

MAT. xxiv. 51.

——*appoint him his portion with the Hypocrites.*

IT is a bitter Complaint, which the World has too much given occasion for, *Totus Mundus exercet Histrionem*; the *World* is full of *Hypocrites*; those *Dust-heaps* may in every corner be met withal. Be sure, there cannot be a *full* testimony born against the Sins of this Time and Place, if that *comprehensive Sin* of *Hypocrisie*, should escape our severest reprehensions; nor can a *fuller* testimony against that Sin, be any where

where found in the whole Book of God, than in the words now read unto us.

Our Blessed Saviour is here discoursing on the dangerous condition wherein the World shall be, just before his coming to the *Judgment* of it. Altho' there are now *revealed* those things about the *day* and *hour* of our Lords, which even our Lord himself, as he was *Man*, was not before his Exaltation so exactly acquainted with; yet the most of Mankind will be *sleepy* and *secure*, towards this great *Evening* of the World, and be surprized by the coming of the Lord. Our Lord therefore with several *Parables* inculcates the Duty of *Watchfulness* upon us all; and one of those *Parables* is full of those warnings that *Church Officers* are peculiarly concerned in.

Just before the coming of our Lord, his Church, and especially that part of his Church which he may choose to give the more *special signals* of his coming in, shall be oppressed with a Crue of *Bigotted Clergy men*, who have divers Remarkables in their Character.

'Tis one thing in their Character, *That they shall begin to smite their Fellow-servants.* If there be a Faithful or Painful Minister, that would labour to promote *serious Godliness* in the Nation, they'll be sure to persecute him. They'll pretend unto the *Power of the Keyes*, and by a strange abuse of those *Keyes*, they will not only shut the Doors of Imployment and Preferment upon any Minister that shall be a Friend unto *real Holiness*, but also they will knock those heavy *Church-Keyes* about the Head of every

every such Reformer. *They shall begin to smite,*] that is, they shall silence, they shall molest, they shall get one Law after another forged for the Trouble of good Men; and they shall be in a fair way towards hammering of their *Keyes* into *Swords*, and rendering it a *capital* thing to do any service for God; but they shall be wonderfully hindered from carrying the business on so far; they only *begin*. And it is another thing that herewithal goes to make up their Character, *They shall eat and drink with the drunken*. It seems, a common *Drunkard* shall find more favour with them, than a pious *Christian*; they'll censure the most gracious Men alive, that would be found by our Lord Jesus in the punctual and regular observation of those Orders which he has left for his House to be governed with, until he return unto us; but if a Man be a *Drunkard*, a Swearer, a Gamester, a Whoremaster, then they'll cry, *O he is one of us!* and by no means must such an one be discouraged.

But, *Qui diu toleratur, subito tollitur*: Our Context informs us, that God will bring a sudden *Revolution* upon these unhappy Creatures; and it shall be such a *Revolution*, as will give them their *Portion with the Hypocrites*; or, as *Luke* expresses it, *with the unbelievers*; that is, it will *unchurch* them: All their cry was, *The Church, the Church*, but they shall be now cast out of any Interest in the *Church* of God. When you see such a *Revolution*, you may take it for granted, that whatever the end of *the World* may be, *the end of this World is not a thousand years off*.

My Text represents unto us, the *punishment* of the wickedest Offenders in the Church of God; it is, *to have a portion with the Hypocrites.* But why, *with Hypocrites?* 'Tis partly, because that wicked *Church-Officers* are of all Men the greatest *Hypocrites.* Our Lord elsewhere elegantly calls them, *Wolves in sheeps-cloathing.* But it is also because the *portion* of *Hypocrites* is of all the worst that any Man can be damned unto. Behold, how *Hypocrites* are here accounted as *Free-holders* to the Vengeance of God; other Transgressors are but as it were *Tenants* or *Inmates* with them. 'Tis intimated, that *Hypocrites* are to have the deepest share, the largest room, in those Revenges which God has to execute upon ungodly Men.

The Text is full of *Doctrines*; but there is only this one that must be the Subject of our present Contemplations.

DOCTRINE.

The Portion of Hypocrites, is a very miserable Portion.

By the *portion* of Men is meant, that *condition* which the Great God, in a way of *Recompence*, allots unto them. 'Tis a Phrase frequently occurring in both *Old* and *New Testament*; and it carries both *condition* and *recompence* in the signification of it. The God of Heaven will take a time to fulfil that frequently repeated, and solemnly confirmed, Word of

his, in *Rev.* 22. 12. *I come quickly* [Tis the laſt Advice we have had from Heaven!] *and my reward is with me*; *to give every man according as his work ſhall be.* But when this Time does come, the Portion of the *Hypocrite* will be found extreamly *miſerable.*

We may ſpend theſe *Propoſitions* upon this awful Truth.

PROP. I.

An *Hypocrite* is one who does pretend *Religion*, and *but* pretend it. *Hypocriſie* is properly a *counterfeit* of Religion. The *Greek* word for an *Hypocrite*, ſignifies a *Stage-player.* As a *Stage-player* will act the part of a *King*, though he be indeed a *Beggar*; ſo an *Hypocrite* acts the part of a *Saint*, while he is but a *Sinner* ſtill. The word comes from a Theme, that ſignifies to *compare*; and a diminutive Particle is prefixed unto it; ſo that *Hypocriſie* is a thing that may be *compared* unto true Religion; it has a *likeneſs* and a *ſhadow* of Religion; but it comes very *ſhort* of the reality; the reſemblance is a dull, a faint, an empty thing. Accordingly, the *Hebrew* word for an *Hypocrite* comes from a Root that ſignifies, to *tinge*, or *dye* a thing of another Colour than what is Natural. Thus an *Hypocrite*, is one that appears not in his *own colours*; there are *falſe colours* that his Religion is diſguiſed and concealed with. Particularly,

First, In the Religion of an *Hypocrite* his *Graces* want an *Ingredient*, essential to the Graces of true Religion. The utmost attainment of an *Hypocrite*, is that in *Acts* 26. 28. *Almost thou perswadest me to be a Christian.* As for the *Hypocrite*, his *Faith* is but *Almost* that which is, *The Faith of Gods Elect.* His *Repentance* is but *Almost* that which is, *The Repentance not to be repented of.* His *Holiness* is but *Almost* that which is, *The holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.* They say concerning the Devils, that in *Apparitions* of them, there never is a *compleat* and *perfect* shape; there is alwayes a *blemish* upon it, by which, as by a *cloven Foot*, it may be distinguished. This may be said about the *Devil* of *Hypocrisie*; it has a *shape* of Religion, but there are no *compleat* and *perfect* Graces in it: Some chief *Ingredient* is lacking in them. Our Lord said once to a notable *Hypocrite*, in *Matth.* 10. 21. *One thing thou lackest.* Here lies the miscarriage of an *Hypocrite!* He may have so much *Faith* as to call the Lord Jesus Christ, *The Saviour of the World.* But alas, *One thing thou lackest*; he does not utterly renounce all his own Righteousness, and his own Strength, and his own Will, and cordially receive the Lord Jesus Christ in every one of *all his Offices.* He may have so much *Repentance*, as to shed whole *Bottles* of Tears for his many Sins; but, *one thing thou lackest*; he has one beloved Sin, one *Herodias*, that he must be spared in; there is one *Right Eye*, one *Right Hand*, one Darling Lust, that he can't endure the Mortification of. He may have so much *Holiness*, as like

like him in the Gospel, *to do many things*; but, *one thing thou lackest*: Some one Command of God there is, which he has an irreconcileable prejudice unto; it cannot be said of him, *He counts the precept concerning all things to be right, and he hates every false way.*

Secondly, In the Religion of an *Hypocrite*, his *Duties* want a *Principle*. necessary to the Duties of true Religion. The *Hypocrites* case is that in *Matth.* 25. 3. *They took their lamps, and took no oyl with them.* One of the *Jewish* Rabbies describes to us the fashion of the *Lamps* which that Scripture alludes unto. They were certain *Staves* or *Canes*, to be carried in their hands, having *Vessels* at the top, into which they put both a great *Wick*, and an *Oyl* to feed it. Now 'tis the *Hypocrites* guise, he may make a marvellous *blaze* of performances; but he has not an *oyl* within to supply and nourish that short-liv'd *blaze*. Tell me so much as one *external* thing done by a *Believer*, which may not *also* (I don't say *as well*) be done by an *Hypocrite*. As how does the Believer *hear* the Word of God, on Sabbath-days, and Lecture-days? Why, we read of some, who are *hearers of the Word*, and yet they *deceive their own selves*. Does the Word of God cause a *Reformation* in the Conversation of a Believer? We read, of them that have *escaped the pollutions of the World, through the knowledge of the Lord*, and yet the *Dogs* return to their *vomit*, the *Swine* return to their *quagmire*; they are *Dogs* and *Swine* still! Does the Believer *pray* much, *fast* oft, and *give Alms* liberally? We read of a false *Pharisee* that could

say

ſay as much, *I Faſt twice in the week, and give Tithes of all that I poſſeſs.* In a Word, can a Believer *ſuffer* in the cauſe of God? We read of ſome that can *give their Bodies to be burned*, and yet have in them no *Charity* or Sincerity. A *Paul* and an *Alexander* may be fellow-ſufferers. What is then the difference? Briefly, *deeſt aliquid intus*, It lies in the *Principle* of all theſe Duties. *Hypocriſie* don't arrive to this one thing, *The doing of any thing purely out of reſpect unto the bleſſed God.* What is done by the Hypocrite, either he does it out of *Cuſtom*; he is a *Chriſtian* for the ſame cauſe that another is a *Jew*, or a *Turk*, or a *Papiſt*; and he *goes to Church* (as he calls it) upon the very ſame account with his *Dog* that follows him. Or elſe, he does it out of *terror*; all his Reſolutions for God, are like the Vowes that *Pharaoh* made, when the Thunders of Heaven rumbled over him: The fear of Death or *Shame* is the cauſe of all his Goodneſs. Or laſtly, He does it out of *deſign*. He undertakes no good thing without ſome *Earthly Byas* upon his undertaking. It is with him, as in *Matth.* 6. 2. he does, *to be ſeen of men*. An Hypocrite is a *Man-pleaſer*. 'Tis to ſerve ſome Secular Intereſt, that he does liſt himſelf among the People of God; he would quickly deſert them, if danger appeared; as *Rats* and *Mice*, they ſay, will run out of a falling Houſe. There is this failing in the moſt ſplendid and glorious Actions of an Hypocrite, *Have ye done it unto me, even unto me, ſaith the Lord.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, The Hypocrite is not *secretly*, that which he *openly* seems to be. Our Lord has notably touch'd upon this quality of the Hypocrite, in *Matth.* 23. 23, 28. *He makes clean the out-side of the platter: He is like one of the sepulchres*, which the *Jews* whited and painted every Spring; *but within, he is full of hypocrisie and iniquity.* If the Hypocrite can approve himself *World ward*, he is enough; to approve himself *God-ward*, is not the moſt ſollicitous of his cares. He will keep ſome *guard* upon his *Words* and *Walks*, but at the ſame time it may be ſaid, *How long ſhall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?* He takes little pains to cleanſe his *Heart* of ſuch proud, revengeful, envious and laſcivious *thoughts*, as render that Heart of his a noyſome Dunghil before the Lord. It is the deſcription of an Hypocrite, in *Job* 36. 13. he is *an hypocrite in heart.* Indeed that is the property of an Hypocrite, *God ſhall have any thing but the heart of him.* You may ſee it eſpecially in his Religious Exerciſes; he will be much in ſuch Exerciſes, but he has not his *Heart* prepared for, nor his *Heart* affected in, thoſe Exerciſes. He will do *good Works* every day, but is not ſtudious to have *good frames* in the doing of them. God may ſay, *This people draw near me with their mouth, but have removed their heart far from me.* To inſtance in one Sacred Exerciſe; there is that of *Prayer.* An Hypocrites Prayer, 'tis more by *Art* than by *Heart*; he is very nice about the *Expreſſions* on his Tongue, but wholly regardleſs about the *Impreſſions* on his Heart, when he ſtands before the Lord. And hence alſo the Hypo-

Hypocrite is very forward upon *publick* Exercises, but about *private* ones, he is as remiss as can be; he is very large and full, as to what is to be done at a *Meeting*; but follow him home to his *Closet*, and you shall find small or no Communion with the Almighty there. But now,

PROP. II.

Very *miserable* will be the *portion* of such an Hypocrite. Indeed, some Hypocrisie there is in the best Men alive: Hypocrisie is a corruption, whereof we may speak, as in *Prov.* 20. 9. *Who can say, I have made my heart clean?* But for a Man to have so much Hypocrisie, to be so much under the power and reign of Hypocrisie, as may denominate him an Hypocrite before the Lord; O 'tis impossible to declare the *miseries* that such a Man thereby plunges his own woful Soul into! I remember that when the Queen of *Israel* presented her self before the Prophet in a *disguise*, the good Man that heard of her coming, said in 1 *King.* 14. 6. *Come thou wife of Jeroboam, why feignest thou thy self to be another? I am sent unto thee with heavy tidings.* If there be any Hypocrite now among us [and it is well if there been't!] sitting under the *disguise* of a fair Profession, I must in like sort say unto him, *Come, thou dissembler, I am sent unto thee with heavy tidings from the Lord.* For,

First, The portion of the *Hypocrite* is, *To be cut asunder.* Perhaps he esteems himself safe, and says with *Agag*, *The bitterness of Death is past*;

paſt; but God comes upon him, and like *Agag*, in 1 *Sam.* 15. 33. he is *hewn to pieces before the Lord.* Forlorn Creature! *He* made a *diviſion* between God and the World, a *diviſion* between God and a Luſt; *ſomething* he gave to God, but *ſomething* the World and a Luſt laid claim unto; and now God will make a *diviſion* upon *him* for ever. It was of old the manner to handle ſome that were counted enormous Tranſgreſſors at ſuch a rate, as *cutting them aſunder*: It is reckoned among the uſual Torments, in *Heb.* 11. 37. *They were ſawn aſunder.* It was of old, and it ſtill is, the uſage, for *Traitors* to be thus dealt withal. The *Hypocrite* is a *Traitor* to the *Kingdom of Heaven*; he takes an *Oath of Allegiance* to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and is liſted under the Banner, and for the Service of that Holy Lord; but he is indeed one of the Devils Party all the while. Now, the Great God will proceed againſt the *Hypocrite*, as guilty of an *High Treaſon* againſt his Eternal Majeſty. But this is not all that is in the *cutting aſunder* of the Hypocrite referred unto. *Sacrifices* did uſe to be thus handled in the former Ages; thus, beſides what is recorded concerning the like act of *Abrahams*, we find in *Jer.* 34. 18. *They cut the calf in twain, and paſſed between the parts thereof*, in their *Sacrifices* at the making of their *Covenants*; the ſcope of which Rite was, *q. d. Diſcindantur ejus membra, & fiat ſicut pecus iſtud, qui juramentum violaverit.* Why, the *Hypocrite* is one that has made a *Covenant* with God; but it may be ſaid of ſuch a Man, *His heart was not right with God, neither was he ſtedfaſt in his covenant.*

covenant. Hence what follows but this? The Righteous and Jealous God will make a *Sacrifice* of this wretched Hypocrite; he shall become a *Sacrifice* to the burning and furious Indignation of the Omnipotent God. He has *broke* his Covenant; and now the vindictive Justice of God will *break* him *asunder* for it; or as it is expressed in *Psal.* 50. 22. *I will tear you to pieces, and there shall be none to deliver you.* But when shall the Hypocrite thus be *cut asunder*? It shall be at least when he comes to *dye*, and leave the World. The sharp *scythe* of Death will one day *cut asunder* the Hypocrite, so that the Body and the Spirit of the Man shall never have one comfortable hour together any more. The Curse which was denounced upon *Simeon* and *Levi*, those two Companions in *Hypocrisie*, *that* will God execute upon the Spirit and the Body of an *Hypocrite*, *I will divide and scatter them.* Before the *Hypocrite* is aware of it, an Officer will come from God, that shall say unto him, as in *Luke* 12. 20. *Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.* So, when the *Body* of the Hypocrite shall have *snakes* and *worms* in a cold Grave crawling about it, then shall the *Spirit* of him in an *hot Hell* be under the gnaws of the *worm*, the *snake*, which *never dyes.* But this is not all; it shall be further done, *In the day wherein God will judge the world by Jesus Christ.* God will then *cut* the Hypocrite *asunder* from that Body which heretofore he seemingly belonged unto. Before the Day of Judgment shall expire, we are told in *Matth.* 25. 32. *All Nations shall be gathered together*, and he shall

ſhall ſeparate them one from another, as a Shepherd divides his Sheep from the Goats. God will then *ſeparate* the Hypocrite from all that Society which he crowded once into. Chriſt, and Saints, and Angels, will then hiſs him away with one Voice, *Depart from us, we know thee not.*

Secondly. The portion of the Hypocrite is, *Weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth.* It is more than once, that the Oracles of God have pronounced this Doom upon the Hypocrite; we have it particularly in *Mat.* 8. 12. *There ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth.* It is the ſame that the Prophet long before ſentenced ſuch people unto; in *Iſa.* 65. 14. *Ye ſhall cry for ſorrow of Heart, and ſhall howl for vexation of Spirit.*

There is an Intolerable, and an Interminable *Sorrow* which the Hypocrite ſhall be caſt into; this is meant, by the *Weeping* appointed for him. Here he *wept* now and then under the Ordinances of God; he ſeem'd as if he were much concerned in them; and perhaps, *he could cry when he would*, as your worſt Hypocrites often can? all this was in Jeſt, and his *Tears* were like thoſe which they report of the *Crocodile.* But God will at laſt make him *weep* with more Earneſt and Horrid Agonies. The *Sorrow* which will torture the Soul of the Hypocrite, will be for and in his *Excluſion* from the Bleſſed preſence of God for ever. It was the Reſolve of *David*, in Pſal. 101. 7. *He that worketh Deceit, ſhall not dwell within my Houſe; he that telleth Lies, ſhall not tarry in my ſight.* They that go to Heaven, are alwayes in the *Houſe*, and in the *ſight* of our *David*; but our *David*, our

our Jesus will Banish all *Deceitful* Hypocrites from that *House* and *sight* of His for ever; it is an Inscription upon the Golden Gates of Heaven, *Let never any Hypocrite enter here!* Surely, the Hypocrite must *weep* no less than Tears of Blood when he sees the Gates of Heaven shut upon him. When *Esau* lost a *Blessing* for which he had wrought and hop'd considerably, it's said, *He cried with a great and exceeding bitter Cry.* What a *Cry* will it cause in the Hypocrite, when he shall see himself shut out from a Blessed Heaven, after so many *Works*, and so many *Hopes*, for the obtaining of it! We read concerning *Hypocrites*, in *Mat.* 25. 10, 11, 12. *The Door was shut, and they came saying, Lord, Lord, open to us! But He answered, I know you not.* Such a Cry, will the Hypocrite make, when he perceives an Admission into Heaven is denied unto him; *Lord, Lord! Open to me!* and, *Lord, Lord! is this all that my Religion has obtained for me!* and, *Lord, Lord! Whither art thou now sending of my desolate Soul!* But what further, what rueful *weeping* will the Hypocrite fall into, when he finds the *Devils* and the *Damned* now his Companions for Eternity! When he lies Roaring in the fiery bottom of Hell, and crying out, *I am Tormented in this Flame!* When he feels the Wrath of God, like a Stream of Burning Brimstone Running through his Heart; When he is bleeding and breaking in the *Winepress* of Gods Anger, and is chained up in the *place of Dragons*; and for him then to think, *Here must I Lie, till the very Heavens be no more!* Alas, what *Weeping* must be

he endure, throughout a *Night* that ſhall never have a *Morning!*

But this is not all; there is alſo a diſmal *Vexation* which the Hypocrite ſhall be cruciated with; here is the *Gnaſhing of Teeth* reſerved for him. A *Fever* or *Ague* begins with a *Gnaſhing of the Teeth*; it is a terrible *Fever* that the Soul of the Hypocrite ſhall fall into. His *Diſappointment*, will be ſuch as will make him *gnaſh his Teeth* for *Vexation* of Soul; it may therefore be ſaid of him, as in *Pſal.* 112. 10. *He ſhall ſee it, and be grieved; he ſhall gnaſh with his Teeth.* There are eſpecially two vexing Loſſes, which will make the very *Teeth* of the Hypocrite *clatter* in the Head of him. He ſhall *firſt*, find that he has loſt all his *Works*, and he will *gnaſh his Teeth* at ſuch a *Loſs*. 'Tis a thouſand to one, but the Hypocrite loſes even *in* this World, what *of* this World he had been labouring for. *Judas* had play'd the Hypocrite for a little *Money*; but, I pray, what had he got when he came to caſt up his Accounts? Methinks, I ſee how he *gnaſhed his Teeth*, when he threw down his Money, and ſaid, *Here take it again: I have made but a curſed Bargain of it!* The Hypocrite has been ſquinting at ſome ſecular Advantage in all he did; but it is ſaid in *Job* 8. 14. *The Hypocrites Truſt ſhall be as a Spiders Web.* He as it were, unbowell'd himſelf, to get an Eaſie Lodging here; but all on the ſudden, there comes a miſchievous *Beeſom*, that ſweeps down all the Riches, and all the Honours, and all the Pleaſures which he had been *ſpinning* for. But be ſure, the Hypocrite loſes all his Labours for *another* World.

His *Faith* is nothing in the account of God, becauſe it is not ſuch as that in 1 *Tim.* 1. 5. A *Faith unfeigned.* His *Love*, is of no account with God, becauſe it is not ſuch as that in *Rom.* 12. 9. A *Love without Diſſimulation.* All his Laborious Devotions, they are all thrown away; they are the Sacrifices, that are *Abomination to the Lord.* The Infamous *Jehu*, was a Great Hypocrite; wherefore, though he did many things that God commanded him, yet the Lord ſaid, *I will for thoſe very things be Avenged on him.* After the Hypocrite has been much and long induſtrious about the Things of God, he will find a *Mene Tekel* written upon it all; the Juſt God will make him know, *'Tis all weigh'd in the Ballances and found wanting!* And how will it now make him *gnaſh his Teeth* to think, *All the Hours that I ſpent in the pretended Service of God, I ſhall never be one jot the better for them!* But he ſhall then *likewiſe* find, that he has loſt all his *Hopes*; and he will yet more *gnaſh his Teeth* at ſuch a *Loſs* as that. It is an amazing Enquiry, in *Job* 27. 8. *What is the Hope of the Hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God takes away his Soul?* 'Tis poſſible the Hypocrite has *gained* ſome Honour, and ſome Figure, by his Devotions; yea, 'tis poſſible, that he has *gained* ſome confident *Hope* of Everlaſting Bleſſedneſs. But O! what becomes of that *Hope*, when God ſummons the poor Man before His Dreadful Tribunal? We are told in *Job* 20. 5. *The Joy of the Hypocrite is but for a moment.* Why? becauſe, *The Hope of the Hypocrite is but for a moment.* When the Hypocrite is thrown down into the fiery diſmal Vault

Vault below, that horrible *Fire-light* will give him a true ſight of himſelf. One of the firſt Shrieks that he will make, at his going down, will be, *O I hoped for better things than ſo!* It is ſaid, *They that go down to the Pit cannot Hope.* All the *Hope* that the Hypocrite had of his Acceptance with God, will be extinguiſhed, when God ſhall clap him up into the Dungeons of the Devouring *Pit.* The Hypocrite is that *Fooliſh Builder*, whom in *Mat.* 7. 26. we find mention of; he had built a fair Houſe of a fine Hope; only 'twas on the *Sand*; the Storms of Divine Wrath will ſhortly overſet that *Houſe*, that *Hope.* Now, if as the Wiſe man ſpeaks, *Hope Deferred makes the Heart ſick*, what will *Hope Fruſtrated?* and this, an *Hope* of *Heaven*, of *Glory* too? O how he will *gnaſh his Teeth* to ſee all his *Hopes* thus at once exterminated!

Thirdly, and Summarily. The *worſt* of Puniſhments muſt be the Portion of the Hypocrite. when one would ſpeak of the Hotteſt and Loweſt place in Hell, when one would ſpeak of the furtheſt Pulls on the *Racks* with which undone Sinners are Tormented there, we are to call it, *The Portion of the Hypocrite.* It is ſaid in *Job* 36. 13, 14. *The Hppocrites heap up Wrath; and their Life is among the Unclean.* It is not a common *Wrath*; no. there are vaſt *Heaps* and Loads and Weights and Mountains of *Wrath*, which the *Hypocrite* has to welter under! He is, *Among the Unclean*; it refers to the Deſtruction that came upon the *Sodomites* of old. God often leaves the Hypocrite unto a Courſe of ſome *Uncleanneſs*; it may be that he has been an *old*

Professor, but an *old Hypocrite* all the while; nevertheless, even in his old Age, he follows a Trade of *Lechery* that could hardly be imagined. However, God will deal with an *Hypocrite*, as with another *Sodomite*; he may expect an *Horrible Tempest* of Judgments to rain down from Heaven upon him; and be sure, he cannot escape the *Vengeance of Eternal Fire*. Yea, unto *Hypocrites* our Lord has given that awful Warning in *Mat.* 11. 24. *It shall be more tolerable for the Land of* Sodom, *than for thee! Hypocrisie* is indeed a Crime of a *Deep Dy A Portion with Hypocrites*, here i- called in *Luke* 12. 46. *A Portion with Unbelievers* An *Hypocrite* is a sort of an *Infidel*; we say, *Simulata Sanctitas, est Duplex Iniquitas*; it is a wicked thing for a Man to be an *Enemy* unto the God that made him; but for him at the same time to profess a *Friendship* for the Lord, this is a *Double* Wickedness; a *Double* one did I say? nay, 'tis more then a *Treble* one; there is *Atheism*, there is *Unbelief*, there is Prodigious *Idolatry* in *Hypocrisie*; 'tis a *Big bellied* Sin. And no wonder then, that it brings forth such astonishing Plagues unto them that are guilty of it. No wonder that our Lord in one Chapter, namely, in the Twenty Third of *Matthew*, pronounces no less than Seven or Eight *Woes* together, upon these *woful* Creatures! How fast he Repeats a *Wo to you Hypocrites!* and again, *Wo to you Hypocrites!* Had I like one of the Three Angels in the Revelation, a *Wo-Trumpet* in my Hand, the *Woes* of the *Hypocrite* are those which it might chiefly and justly be filled withal. Well then,

APPLI-

APPLICATION.

I. Let us all *examine* our ſelves, whether we are like to be found among thoſe *Hypocrites*, whoſe *portion* is very miſerable.

Do but conſider this one thing, *How eaſie 'tis to be an Hypocrite.* There are *ſelf condemned* Hypocrites; thoſe to whom it may be ſaid, as it was to *Shimei*, *Thou knoweſt the wickedneſs which thy own heart is privy to.* But then, there are *ſelf deceived* Hypocrites; thoſe over whoſe Graves it may at laſt be written, *A deceived Heart was that which turned them aſide.* An Hypocrite may not only deceive Neighbours, deceive Churches, deceive Miniſters, but alſo deceive himſelf: We read of one who *ſeems to be Religious*, and yet, as in *Jam.* 1. 26. *He deceives his own Soul.* I'll tell you the Name of the moſt crafty and bloody *deceiver* in the World, and I'll tell you, where you ſhall find him too. You need not ſtir from the place where you now ſit, that you may find that *Impoſtor*, which has already cheated a million of Hypocrites of their very Lives; in one word, *It is the heart of man.* Tis this *Heart* of ours, whereof we are told in *Jer.* 17. 9. *The heart is deceitful above all things; who can know it?* I remember, that once reciting unto a Sick Perſon the Terms of the Goſpel, and inquiring whether he did not think himſelf ſincere in his conſent unto them, he made me this diſcreet Anſwer, *O Sir, I ſhould think ſo, if it were not for the Seventeenth of* Jeremiah, *and the Ninth.* Why, this

I would ſay, were it not for the *Seventeenth* of *Jeremiah* and the *Ninth*, it were not ſo needful for us to be afraid of our own *Hypocriſie*. But now, *Bleſſed is the man that feareth always.* When our Lord had no more than *twelve* Diſciples in his Family, *one* of them was an *Hypocrite*. How many *Hypocrites* may we then reaſonably think there are in this whole Congregation! Certainly it becomes every one of us to ſearch, *Lord, is it I? Lord, is it I?* It was a terrible Expreſſion uſed by the Famous *Chryſoſtom*, unto a vaſt Aſſembly; *Hearken*, ſaid he, *here are divers Thouſands of you, yet I doubt whether above One Hundred of you ever get ſafe to Heaven at laſt.* God forbid that there ſhould be room for any ſuch uncharitable computation upon *this* Aſſembly. But this I ſay, 'tis well if many of us do not by our *Hypocriſie* miſcarry for ever.

Shall I mention a few ſorts of Men that have more peculiar cauſe to be ſuſpicious of themſelves?

Firſt, It is groſs Hypocriſie for a Man to pretend *Religion*, and intend ſomething elſe; perhaps *Knavery* and *Villany*. It was a Deviliſh Hypocriſie in *Jezabel*, to ſeem concerned for the *Name* of God, but really to purſue a *coveteous* and *malicious* humour of her own. Thus *Herod*, will by all means *worſhip* our Lord; but his aim was to *murder* him. Thus *Judas* muſt by all means have the Poor well provided for; whereas, *This he ſaid not that he cared for the poor, but becauſe he was a Thief.* Such was the Hypocriſie of *Saul*; he pretends for the *Battles*

of

of the Lord, when the buſineſs was to deſtroy a Godly Neighbour: In a mighty Zeal for *Iſrael*, he muſt clear the Church of all the *Gibeonites* that were now got into it. Such a Zeal for the Church had he, that no *Diſſenters* can be ſpared; but the bottom of the buſineſs might be their *Lands*, which lay near to his, might thus fall into his hands. Thus *Abſalom* declares for *Church-work*, but *Rebellion* and *Sedition* lay at the bottom of all. 'Tis frequent for Men to cry up *Diana*, becauſe of the *Shrines*. How many follow our Lord, *becauſe of the Loaves?* Men will be *Miniſters* to get a *Living*, and *Church-Members* to get an *Office* among their Neighbours. This was the *Hypocriſie* of the *Phariſees* in *Matth.* 23. 14. *Te devour widows houſes, and for a pretence make long prayer.* Their way was this; they pray'd every day in the *Synagogue*; and they ſpent an Hour before Prayer, and an Hour after Prayer, in *Meditation*. Hence all People which now ſaw them ſpend ſo many Hours every Day in Prayer, concluded, *Theſe are brave Men; we can't better diſpoſe of our Eſtates, than to put them into the hands of ſuch Men as theſe!* and ſo they got by the Trick. This now is pure *Hypocriſie*.

Secondly, It looks Hypocritically for Men to have a *ſcrupulous tenderneſs* about a thing of *no conſequence*, and make no Conſcience of the things that are moſt *conſiderable*. *To ſtrain at a Gnat and ſwallow a Camel*, is a certain mark in the Throat, by which an *Hypocrite* may be known. 'Tis true, that very *good Men* may be ſtrict about very *ſmall things*; and if we ſhould

ſee any of them to be *more nice than wiſe*, we may not call them, *old Hypocrites*; no, we ſhould even deny our ſelves of any thing but *an opportunity to ſerve God*, rather than diſturb ſome of their *little Fancies*. But if one that ſeems very ſtrict, perhaps about a *Trifle*, about which they have no Scripture, no Command of God, ſhall yet at the ſame time allow himſelf in curſed *Immoralities*; I would not have you call him ſo; but this I ſay, *Let that man call himſelf an hypocrite*. It was a Rebuke diſpenſed by our Lord, in *Matth.* 23 23. *Wo to you hypocrites, for ye pay tithes of mint, and aniſe, and cummin; and have omitted the weightier matters of the law judgment, mercy and faith*; by *Faith* is meant *fidelity* to their *Promiſes*. Thus 'twere an Hypocritical thing for a Man to ſcruple taking a *Lawful Intereſt* for his Money, and yet make no Conſcience of unconſcionable Cheating, Fraudulence or Oppreſſion otherwiſe. Thus alſo, are there any People that will be mighty fierce perhaps againſt an *Innocent Faſhion* taken up among the People of God, and yet will be notorious *Promiſe-breakers*, and *Revilers*, and *Slanderers*; and can, it may be, indulge themſelves in loathſome Senſualities? I make no ſtick to tell you, *They are ſtark naught*. The *Jews* forſooth, were ſcrupulous of entering the *Judgment-Hall*, becauſe they had eaten the Paſſover the Night before, and the approach of the Sabbath called them now to prepare for the repetition of it, ſo that they muſt by no means be defiled; and yet theſe Miſcreants were now committing the moſt execrable Cruelty and Bloodineſs

Bloodineſs in the World! So there are thoſe that will *bow* at the Name of Jeſus, and yet *ſwear* by that Holy Name. There are thoſe that will be all on fire upon ſome diſputable thing in the *Congregational* or the *Presbyterian* Diſcipline, and yet can be drunk every now and then. What is this, but a moſt vile *Hypocriſie*?

Thirdly, It is a ſhrowd ſign of *Hypocriſie* when Men are impatient at juſt and fit *Reproofs* beſtowed upon them. There are thoſe who cannot ſtomach the *publick Reproofs* of the Miniſtry; but like *Stephens* Hearers, they'll *gnaſh their Teeth* upon the Embaſſadours of God; yea, they'll ſtrive rather to retort them with an equal Impenitence and Abſurdity. As now, our Lord reproved the *Jews* for that in *Matth.* 23. 5. *They make broad their phylacteries, and inlarge the borders of their garments.* It may be proved, that our Lord himſelf wore thoſe *Phylacteries*, and thoſe *Borders*, though with a becoming Modeſty. However, he taxes their *Pride*, and their *Exceſs*, and their *Hypocriſie* in them things: Now, ſuppoſe that inſtead of reforming the Vices which he reproved, they ſhould only have reproached him with ſuch impertinent clamours, *Why, does not he wear ſuch things himſelf?* 'Twould be a moſt ridiculous *hypocriſie*, ſo to divert from the Fault which notice had been taken of. And the *private Reproofs* of a Neighbourhood, are unſufferably *diſtaſted*, though they have been ſufficiently *deſerved* by very many. If one would go to recover them out of an evil thing, I'll tell you how they muſt be treated;

treated; even as 'tis expreſſed in 2 *Sam.* 23. 6, 7. *They can't be taken with hands; but the man that ſhall touch them, muſt be fenced with iron.* You muſt be wonderfully guarded; they'll not acknowledge any of *their own* offences, but inſtead of it, they'll rip up as many of *yours* as can be deviſed. And if after all, they'll ſeem to thank you for adviſing them, they'll yet bear you a *grudge* and a *ſpleen* that will vent it ſelf upon the firſt occaſion. This now is a Brand of a moſt rotten *Hypocrite.*

Fourthly, 'Tis an hundred to one, but *Hypocriſie* towards *Men*, is accompanied with *hypocriſie* towards *God.* Our Carriage towards *God* and *Men* holds a very near correſpondence. There are monſtrous *Flatterers* in the World; they'll ſpeak you fair, and be your *humble Servants*, and gladly do you the utmoſt Service; but they'll immediately behind your Back, do you all the miſchief that can be contrived. *Solomon* has given you a Rule about them, in *Prov.* 26. 25. *He diſſembles; when he ſpeaks fair, believe him not; for there are ſeven abominations in his heart.* Why, 'tis extreamly probable that ſuch People do but *flatter* the Great God himſelf. All their *Piety* is but *Flattery*; all the good they ſpeak or do, is but *from the Teeth outwards.* And it is well if they don't *flatter themſelves* too, till their *iniquity be found hateful.* Theſe, and ſuch as theſe, are they to whom it may be ſaid, as in *Acts* 8. 21. *Thy heart is not right in the ſight of God.* But then,

II. Let

II. Let us all *indeavour* that we may not be found among thoſe *Hypocrites* that muſt have a miſerable *portion* at the laſt. You may obſerve, that the ſame Sinner who is in the Writings of *David* and *Solomon* call'd *a Fool*, is in the Book of *Job* call'd *an Hypocrite*. So then, if we would not be found *Fools* at laſt, or if we would not fall into all thoſe *Miſeries* which *Fools* muſt *ſuffer becauſe of their iniquities* : O then look to it, that we be not *Hypocrites* before the Lord.

When our Lord once had a bigger Auditory than this to Preach unto, and as 'tis reported, *There were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people*, he thus began his Holy Sermon in *Luke* 12. 1. *Beware of the leaven of the Phariſees which is hypocriſie. The leaven of the Phariſees* is elſewhere expounded, *The doctrine of the Phariſees.* We ſhould therefore in the firſt place, beware of *corrupt Opinions*, which may have a tendency like *leaven*, to ſwell and ſower our Hearts within us, and ſo to make us *Hypocrites.* All corrupt Opinions are *formally* hypocriſie ; they ſeem Truths when they are not ſo ; but ſome ſuch are *effectively* hypocriſie, they have a tendency to *make* Men hypocrites. If you think, as the *Phariſees* did, that the *Law* of God reaches no further than the Behaviours of our *outward Man* : If you think, as the *Phariſees* did, that a ſober Life will ſave us, without a thorough *Regeneration* in our Souls ; we ſhall be but *hypocrites* like the *Phariſees.* Thus, if it be your Opinion, that you have a *Free-will* of your own to ſpiritual good ; that without a

ſpecial

special work of Gods Grace upon your Souls, you can come up to the Terms of the Gospel; this Opinion will never carry a Man beyond *hypocrisie*. A disputing *Arminian* may perhaps be a true Child of God; he does not, he dares not act upon his own Assertions; but it may be demonstrated, *That a practical Arminian cannot go beyond an hypocrite*. But waving that, as our Saviour began *his*, thus let me conclude *my* Sermon, *Beware of hypocrisie*.

To prosecute this, I only recommend these two things unto you.

First, Zealous *Prayers*. When the Apostle had found a Man, *whose heart was not right*, said he, in *Acts* 8. 22. *Pray to God*. O cry mightily to Heaven, that you may not be left unto the delusions of *Hypocrisie*. It was the Apostles course for *his People*, in *Phil.* 1. 10. *I pray that ye may be sincere*. Let that be our course *for our selves*; that none of you may be any *Hypocrite*. Pray much, pray hard, and pray *Davids* Prayer, *Lord, make my heart sound in thy statutes*. And,

Secondly, Severe *Tryals*. Follow that method in 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. *Examine your selves, prove your own Souls*; and be very exact, curious, and jealous in the scrutiny. This is a thing which *Hypocrisie* has usually a great antipathy unto; an Hypocrite can't endure the *Touchstone*. If you love to have your Hearts well ransacked for you, and if you are willing and ready to have the *searchers* come aboard you, to see what your *loading* and your *clearing* is, this will be

be an happy Token of your *ſincerity*; and if you are often and ſtrictly *ſearching* of your own Souls, leſt you ſhould have in you any undiſcerned *way of wickedneſs*; this will be the way to prevent *Hypocriſie*.

I am ſenſible, that I have now delivered a Sermon, that will cauſe divers Perſons to be inquiſitive,

How ſhall I know whether I been't an Hypocrite?

One Token I have already given you; that is, *Would you fain be tryed?*

I would further add theſe two Notes.

One is this; No Hypocrite can be humbly thankful for *Afflictions*, becauſe he finds them to bring him nearer to God. The Hypocrite can't feelingly ſay, as in *Pſal.* 119. 71. *It is good for me to have been afflicted, that I may learn thy ſtatutes.* Can you heartily bleſs God that he has croſt you, ſcourged you, bereaved you, and thereby prevented your wandering from him? This I ſay, *Hereby we know that we are paſſed from Death to Life.*

Another is this: No Hypocrite can live as under the *Eye* of the Great God. The Hypocrite can't really ſay, as in *Pſal.* 16. 8. *I have ſet the Lord always before me.* Do you realize the Omnipreſence of God? and you ſo awd by

special work of Gods Grace upon your Souls, you can come up to the Terms of the Gospel; this Opinion will never carry a Man beyond *hypocrisie*. A disputing *Arminian* may perhaps be a true Child of God; he does not, he dares not act upon his own Assertions; but it may be demonstrated. *That a practical Arminian cannot go beyond an hypocrite.* But waving that, as our Saviour began *his*, thus let me conclude *my* Sermon, *Beware of hypocrisie.*

To prosecute this, I only recommend these two things unto you.

First, Zealous *Prayers*. When the Apostle had found a Man, *whose heart was not right*, said he, in *Acts* 8. 22. *Pray to God.* O cry mightily to Heaven, that you may not be left unto the delusions of *Hypocrisie*. It was the Apostles course for *his People*, in *Phil.* 1. 10. *I pray that ye may be sincere.* Let that be our course *for our selves*; that none of you may be any *Hypocrite*. Pray much, pray hard, and pray *Davids* Prayer, *Lord, make my heart sound in thy statutes.* And,

Secondly, Severe *Tryals*. Follow that method in 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. *Examine your selves, prove your own Souls*; and be very exact, curious, and jealous in the scrutiny. This is a thing which *Hypocrisie* has usually a great antipathy unto; an Hypocrite can't endure the *Touchstone*. If you love to have your Hearts well ransacked for you, and if you are willing and ready to have the *searchers* come aboard you, to see what your *loading* and your *clearing* is, this will be

be an happy Token of your *ſincerity*; and if you are often and ſtrictly *ſearching* of your own Souls, leſt you ſhould have in you any undiſcerned *way of wickedneſs*; this will be the way to prevent *Hypocriſie*.

I am ſenſible, that I have now delivered a Sermon, that will cauſe divers Perſons to be inquiſitive,

How ſhall I know whether I been't an Hypocrite?

One Token I have already given you; that is, *Would you fain be tryed?*

I would further add theſe two Notes.

One is this; No Hypocrite can be humbly thankful for *Afflictions*, becauſe he finds them to bring him nearer to God. The Hypocrite can't feelingly ſay, as in *Pſal.* 119. 71. *It is good for me to have been afflicted, that I may learn thy ſtatutes.* Can you heartily bleſs God that he has croſt you, ſcourged you, bereaved you, and thereby prevented your wandering from him? This I ſay, *Hereby we know that we are paſſed from Death to Life.*

Another is this: No Hypocrite can live as under the *Eye* of the Great God. The Hypocrite can't really ſay, as in *Pſal.* 16. 8. *I have ſet the Lord alwayes before me.* Do you realize the Omnipreſence of God? and you ſo awed by

by that Omnipreſence, as that you dare not live in thoſe *commiſſions*, or thoſe *omiſſions*, which none but the Infinite God could charge you for? Then I again ſay. *Child, be of good cheer, thy ſins are forgiven thee.*

The

The Door of Hope:

OR,

An Antidote againſt the Sin of Deſpair, in them that have been moſt guilty of other Sins.

EZEK. xxxvii. 2.

Behold, they ſay, our Hope is loſt.

וְאָבְדָה תִקְוָתֵנוּ

IT is mentioned as the Special Deſign which calls for the Study and Labour of Goſpel-Miniſters, in *Luke* 3. 4, 5. *To prepare the way of the Lord, that every Valley may be filled, and every Mountain may be brought low.* When the Lord

Lord is endeavouring the Converſion of ſinful Fallen Men, he finds divers unhappy Obſtacles lying in *His way*; and *His way* is particularly incommoded by both *Mountains* and *Vallies* obſtructing the Efficacies of His Word upon their Souls. There are the *Mountains* of *Preſumption*, on which *dark Mountains* not a few unwary men ſtumble and periſh for evermore. Thoſe *Mountains*, I hope, are *brought low* among you. But there are alſo the *Vallies* of *Deſpair*, which endanger the Souls of Men; many are thoſe that lie in theſe *deadly ſhading Vallies*, there *pining away in their Iniquities*. To *Fill* thoſe *Vallies* with *Counſels* and *Comforts* fetch'd from the *Field* of the Scriptures, muſt be the Attempt of our Diſcourſe at this time; and the Text now read will do us good Service in it.

Ezekiel is by one of the Ancients well called, *A Beholder of great things*. Truly, 'tis a *great thing* which in this Chapter he is *Beholding* of. This *Hieroglyphical Prophet*, for ſo likewiſe have Learned Men ſtyled him, in the Beginning of this Chapter, *Beholds* the Reſtitution of *Iſrael*, exhibited under the *Hieroglyphic* of a Reſurrection from the Dead. *Iſrael* was once Reſtored from the *Babyloniſh* Captivity; *Iſrael* ſhall yet be more wonderfully, and glorioufly Reſtored from the *Roman* Captivity; both of theſe Reſtorations to that *Body Politick* afford a *Type* of what our *Natural Bodies* will have experience of, at the *Reſurrection of the Juſt*. But *Spiritual Myſteries* are alſo couched in this Admirable Prophecy. All the Articles of it are fulfilled in the *Converſion of a Sinner unto God*. In that marvellous Work,

a

a *Dead Soul* comes to be *Raiſed*, *Shaped*, *Clothed*, and *Quickened*; therein alſo the *Myſtical Body* of Chriſt is compleated, juſt according to the meaſures that are taken here. And therefore obſerving only that Aſpect of my Text, you may diſcern in it the *Circumſtances* of unconverted or unrenewed Men; they are *deſperate* Circumſtances. We have two things before us:

Firſt, Their *Condition*. Their *Bones are dried*; they lie in a *Grave* of Sin and Wretchedneſs, and they may ſigh, *I am Free among the Dead*. They cannot *ſtir*, they cannot *mind*, they cannot *ſpeak*, they are full of all *Corruption* and *Rottenneſs*, and conſumed by the *Worms* of Guilt in the *Sepulchers* of Unbelief.

Secondly, Their *Concluſion*; Which is to be reckoned not only among the *Effects*, but alſo among the *Cauſes* of their ſad *Condition*. They ſay, *Our hope is loſt*; a diſmal *Deſpair* ſeizes on their Spirits; which as it *Afflicts* them, ſo likewiſe it *Reſtrains* them. It ſeems mention'd as the *Grave ſtone*, which helps to keep them in the *Grave* of their Calamities. Whence the *Doctrine* before us, is,

DOCTRINE.

A ſinful and woful Deſpair *is one of the unhappy Entanglements, which* Lost men *often lye under the power of.*

The Loſt *Souls* of Men come to be yet more Loſt, by their Apprehenſions that their *Hopes* are Loſt. Their being *without Hope* is that which more than any thing puſhes them *beyond Help*.

PROP. I.

All Men by Nature are *Loſt* Men; or, to continue the Figure in our Text, *All* Men are *Dead* Men. We muſt Reflect upon this, becauſe here lies the *Pinch* in the *Deſpair* which we are to treat about. The Souls of Men by ſin are plunged into all the Miſeries of *Death*. All Unconverted Men may ſay, *Our Bones are Dried*; they may ſay, *Our Souls are Dead*. When *Lazarus* had been Four Days in the *Belly of the Earth*, his Body was not in a more forlorn eſtate than is the Soul of every Unconverted Man. His Caſe is that in *Eph.* 2. 1. *Dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins*. For, *Firſt*, A Sentence of Death is Paſſed upon all *Adam*'s Children by the Judgment of God. Man had no ſooner ſinned, but from the Mouth of God, there came that fearful Doom upon him, in *Gen.* 2. 17. *Thou ſhalt ſurely die*. He now ſtands obliged in moſt indiſſoluble and indiſpenſable Bonds, to ſuffer all the Plagues which the Juſtice and Vengeance of the Almighty God may inflict upon him. And *then*, That Sentence of Death, is in a dreadful meaſure *already* executed upon every Man that is not brought home to God. 'Tis ſaid in *John* 3. 36. *He that Believeth not, has the Wrath of God Abiding on him*. The *Devil*, who is the *Angel of Death*, has the Sinner in his cruel Hands; the

The Executioners of Gods terrible *Wrath*, are cutting and mangling of him every day. They ſerve him, as the *Philiſtines* did poor *Sampſon*; they bind him, they blind him, and they make him grind for them, in the *Houſe of Death*. He is become the *Captive of the Mighty*, and the *Prey of the Terrible Ones*. Moreover, This undone Man is utterly unable to *Help himſelf* out of this undone State. And there is a concurrence of two things to this Lamentable Incapacity of the Ungodly Man. Firſt, The Man has no *Price* to pay. He cannot *Buy off* the *Puniſhment* that Sin has devoted him unto: Suppoſe he could now begin to live a *ſinleſs Life*, yet that would not croſs the old Score; the *Debts* of Satisfaction owing to the Holy God for the many former Tranſgreſſions and Violations of his Holy Law, would not thus be cancelled. The *Law* calls for no leſs than an *Innocent Nature*, and an *uninterrupted Obedience*, which none of us all, after our *Firſt ſin*, can pretend unto; it ſaies in *Gal.* 3. 10. *Curſed is he that continues not.* But beſides, the Man cannot but be *ſinning*, and *ſinning* every day. And what has he, wherewith to make amends for the Wrongs done to that God, who *is of purer Eyes than to behold Evil, and who cannot look upon Iniquity?* The Sinner has Nothing to pay; and hence in *Rev.* 3. 17. he is called, *A poor and a naked Man.* The Infinite God makes this Demand, *Let my ſtained Glory be Repaired, or thou ſhalt lie in the Fiery Priſon of my Wrath for ever.* But the Man has nothing to offer by way of Reparation unto God; though he ſhould ſpend all his Dayes in Tears and Prayers,

and the moſt prodigious Mortifications, what would they ſignifie? 'Tis confeſſed in *Pſ.* 130. 3. *O Lord, If thou ſhouldſt mark Iniquity, Lord, who ſhould ſtand?* Secondly, The Man has alſo no *Power* to Employ. He cannot *ſhake off* the *Slavery* which he is by Sin Engaged in. Hence he is in *Rom.* 5. 6. ſaid to be, *without ſtrength.* The Call of the Lord Redeemer unto him is, *Look to me and be ſaved*; but alas! he is *without ſtrength.* The Call is, *Come to me and have Reſt*; but alas! he is *without ſtrength.* It was an humbling Expoſtulation uſed unto them, in *John* 5. 44. *How can ye believe?* 'Tis to be uſed unto every Natural Man; *How canſt thou* eſcape the Drudgeries of thy Helliſh Task-maſters? *How canſt thou* avoid the violent Oppreſſors of thy Soul? *How canſt thou* come to love and ſerve God? The Anſwer, is, *It cannot* be done, except *the Son make him free.*

PROP. II.

There is a ſinful and woful *deſpair* which *loſt Men* are liable unto. Becauſe they ſee no *help* for their Souls in themſelves, they are apt to think, there is no *hope* for their Souls any where elſe. They rathly conclude, *There is no hope that ever we ſhall come to live in the favour and the fellowſhip of God.* All *hopes* of having their Souls brought into the *glorious liberty of the Children of God*, ſeem Romantick and Ridiculous things unto them. 'Tis ſaid of all unconverted Men, in *Eph.* 2. 12. they are *without Chriſt*, and *having no hope.* 'Tis true of *all* unregenerate Men, that

that they have no *ground* of *hope* to be ſaved from the perdition which they have plunged themſelves into, while they remain unregenerate. 'Tis ſaid of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in 1 *Tim.* 1. 1. He is *our hope*. The Unregenerate Man knows of no Intereſt that he has in the Mediation of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and therefore he *hath no hope*. But of *ſome* Unregenerate it is further true, that they have no *ſenſe* of *hope* to be ſaved. And theſe are of two ſorts. There are ſome on the one ſide *hopeleſs*, becauſe they are *thoughtleſs*. They can't be ſaid to have any *hope* of *beholding the Face of God in Righteouſneſs, and being ſatisfied with his likeneſs*; or any *hope* of riſing at the laſt Day to be *for ever with the Lord*. For they never *thought* of ſuch things as theſe. 'Tis ſaid of the ſtupid wicked Man in *Pſal.* 10. 4. *God is not in all his thoughts*; and hence, *Life is not in all his hopes*. But on the other ſide, there are ſome *hopeleſs*, becauſe they count themſelves *helpleſs*. They have ſuch an *exquiſite ſenſe* of the Difficulties which their Sins have reduced them into, that they cannot imagine their caſe capable of any redreſs, any relief. They conceive the *Terms* between God and them come to ſuch a paſs, that they muſt periſh without any *remedy* or *eſcaping*. This is true *deſpair*. The ſinful and woful *deſpair* of Men is properly this, *'Tis a diſconſolate imagination of ſomething in the Purpoſe or the Power of God which makes their Salvation to be a thing improbable, if not impoſſible*. Two things are very diſtinguiſhing in this *Deſpair*. *Firſt*, 'Tis with reference to *God* that Salvation is herein *deſpaired*

ſpaired of; otherwiſe 'tis not a *ſinful and woful deſpair*. When the Pſalmiſt was tempted unto *deſpair*, he ſaid in *Pſal* 3. 2. *Many there be which ſay of my ſoul, there is no help for him in God.* The *deſpairing* Man affirms to himſelf, either that *God cannot*, or at leaſt that *God will not* reſcue him from the *deſtruction*, which is a *terrour to him*. Either he ſayes with *Cain My ſin cannot be forgiven*; or with *Job, God counts me for his enemy*. And *then*, The poſture of the Soul, in this *deſpair*, is not now *ſecure* and *eaſie*, but very *fearful*; 'tis according to that in *Heb.* 10. 27. *There remains a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery devouring indignation*. When *Hezekiah* was in *deſpair* of his recovery from Sickneſs, *I reckoned* (ſaid he) *from day even to night, thou wilt make an end of me*. Even ſo, the Man in *deſpair* keeps *reckoning from day to night*, that he is a *caſt-away*, and that *Snares, Fire and Brimſtone, and an horrible Tempeſt*, are juſt ready to fall upon him: He keeps *reckoning, I may be in Hell before to-morrow!* Amazing Frights, intolerable Agonies and Anguiſhes, are hence cauſed in the Mans awakened Soul; they procure the *wounded ſpirit*, which *who can bear?*

PROP. III.

And this *deſpair* is an *unhappy entanglement* unto the Soul that is under the efficacy of it; it extreamly prejudices *the Converſion of the Sinner unto God*. And this upon two accounts.

Firſt,

First, By *deſpair* all Action is *diverted*. All Mankind is governed by that Proverb, *As good ſit ſtill, as riſe up and fall down*. No Man will act without an *end*. What is the *end* of our Converſion? 'Tis *the end of our Faith, the ſalvation of the Soul*. When this *end* is wholly *deſpaired* of, 'tis even againſt the Principles of *common Reaſon*, that a Man ſhould be at any pains to *turn unto the Lord*, or that he ſhould go to *work out his own Salvation*. 'Tis intimated in *Jer.* 2. 25 *Thou ſaidſt, there is no hope. No; for I have loved ſtrangers, and after them I will go.* q. d. We have ſo long and ſo far departed from God, that we *deſpair* of any Reconciliation with him; wherefore we will e'en go on as we have done all this while. Ah, that dull word, *There is no hope!* it cuts the ſinews of all *endeavours* in the World. Thus, let a *deſpairing* Perſon be called upon to *believe*, he replyes, *No, there is no hope I ſhall ever be accepted*. Let him be called upon to *repent*, he replyes, *No, there is no hope I ſhall ever be pardoned*. Let him be urged to attend the *means of Grace*, he rejoins, *No, there is no hope I ſhould ever get any good by them*. And the iſſue is, *After idols he will go*.

Secondly, By *deſpair* God himſelf is provoked. 'Tis a thing wherein Men *add ſin to ſin*. 'Tis the property, eſpecially of all groſs and great *Sins*, to render *Converſion* harder than it was before. The more Men *ſin* againſt God, the wider diſtance do they make between *him* and *them*. Now *deſpair* is one of the moſt *ſcarlet* and *crimſon*, and bloody abominations in the World. It is a moſt roaring Sin; and there

are multiplyed *Blaſphemies* in the Bowels of it. It was a nefandous Blaſphemy of *Spira*, *My Sin is greater than the Mercy of God.* Moſt hideous! But this is the Language of *Deſpair.* 'Twas ſaid of thoſe *deſpairing* People in *Pſal.* 78. 19. *They ſpake againſt God, they ſaid, can God?* Hearken you that ſay, *Can God pity ſuch a Sinner as I am!* You that ſay, *Can God find in his Heart to ſave me, after all that I have been, and done amiſs?* You *ſpeak againſt God* in ſaying ſo; 'tis horrible *Blaſphemy! Auſtin* ſaid of *Cain*, *His Deſpair was a greater Sin than his Murder.* Truly, 'tis not eaſie to commit a greater Sin.

The First USE.

Now, let not a ſinful and woful *Deſpair* of Salvation entangle any of our Souls. I am to addreſs this *Exhortation* even to the oldeſt and the vileſt Sinners among us all; and unto *you* I ſay, let not any *deſpair* of ſucceſs hinder you from repairing to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt with your *labouring and heavy laden* Souls. *Qui nil ſperare poteſt, deſperet nihil.* Be your caſe never ſo bad, however, do not ſay, *our hope is loſt*; but rather hear that Voice of God concerning your Salvation, in *Ezra* 10. 2. *You have treſpaſſed; yet now there is hope in Iſrael concerning this thing.* I would eſſay,

I. To lay ſome *Conſiderations* before *deſpairing* Souls.

Conſider.

Conſider. 1. Your Salvation is a thing which the *Glory* of the Great God will be much furthered and advanced by. You think it an *hard thing* for God to ſave you; but God will think it a *good thing*, and for his own Honour and Intereſt. Perhaps you *deſpair* of Mercy, becauſe you have been a *more than ordinary Sinner*. But, O conſider, a *more than ordinary glory* will come to God, if ſuch an one as *you* be ſaved after all. What is the grand aim of God in the *Juſtification of the Ungodly?* 'Tis to get himſelf a great Name; 'tis as we are told in *Rom.* 5. 8. *To commend his love unto us.* O 'twill *commend the love* of God exceedingly, for the worſt of Sinners to be made partakers of it. An extraordinary Sinner in this Country being Fifty Years old, and being brought home to God a few Weeks before he dyed, had theſe for ſome of his laſt words *All Heaven rings at this! A great and an old Sinner coming to glory!* It is a ſtrange but a ſweet expreſſion in *Pſal.* 25. 11. *For thy Names ſake O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great.* What a word is that! You ſay, *God won't pardon my iniquity, for it is great*, But the *hope* of the Pſalmiſt argues another way; *The Lord will pardon it, for it is great. Great Sinners* procure *great Praiſes* unto our God, when they have experience of his *Mercy*. The *greater the Ail*, the *greater the Cure*. A very triumphant ſhout of *Grace! Grace!* will follow on the ſaving of ſuch a Soul as thine! O go plead this with the God of Heaven!

Conſider. 2. The *Goſpel invitation* makes *your Salvation* among the things that may be hoped for.

for. God has done the *Acts* of one desiring your Salvation; he has done just as one *willing that you should all come unto Repentance.* Why should you have any doubt of *your* being excluded from his Mercy? The Lord Jesus Christ is come into the World, one *mighty to save*, one *able to save unto the uttermost.* And who are concerned in it? We are told in 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. it was the *chief of Sinners.* It may be thou hast been even a *Ring leader* in wickedness, yet such as *you* did the Lord Jesus *appear to save.* He does *invite* every one of you to come unto himself; he sayes in *Isa.* 55. 1. *Ho every one that thirsteth, come.* He sayes in *John* 7. 37. *If any man thirst, let him come.* You say, *I don't thirst.* To that I Answer, Are you *willing* to come? Then you *thirst.* You *may* come; 'tis said in *Rev.* 22. 17. *Whosoever will, let him come.* Behold, the Great King this day holds out the *Golden Scepter* to every one of you all; you may *all* draw near and live. What can be more full than that in *Joh.* 6. 37. *Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* What? Is thy Name excepted there? Did the Lord Jesus ever say, *I except* John *such an one?* Or, *I except* Mary *such an one?* Truly, no. Immortal Souls, the loud Call of the Lord Jesus from the lofty Battlements of Heaven, is that in *Isa.* 45. 22. *Look unto me, and be saved.* And we have a Commission from our Glorious Royal Master to tell you, *That you are all concerned in it.* The Man in thy Clothes, *Thou art the Man* whom this belongs unto. God sayes, *You may be saved*; why

why will you ſay, *I mayn't.* Impudent Potſherd, give not the lye to God.

Conſider. 3. As guilty, as ruined, and as *hopeleſs* Perſons, as any of *you*, have been already ſaved by the Lord. And what ſhould make *your* Salvation then ſuch a *deſpaired* thing? *Abraham* himſelf was once an *Idolater*, and yet I ſuppoſe you would be glad to be in *Abrahams* Boſom. There was one who had been a diſhoneſt, a debauched Woman, a meer *Harlot*; yet was it ſaid of *her*, in *Luke* 7. 47. *Her ſins, which are many, are forgiven.* And why may it not come to be ſaid of *you*? Suppoſe you had been even a *Witch*, one that had with your very *Blood* ſigned a Covenant with the Devil! yet were it poſſible for you to be ſaved. What was *Menaſſeh* of old? Such a deſolate Creature in this Country once was judged to dye a true Penitent; and the Scripture that proved her Comfort was that in *Zech.* 13. 1. *There is a fountain ſet open for ſin and for uncleanneſs.* The moſt bloody Crimes have in that *open Fountain* been waſh'd away. Turn to 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10, 11. one ſays, *Hell it ſelf can't afford a blacker Catalogue of Offenders*: Yet of *them*, 'tis added, *You are juſtified, you are ſanctified.* What ſhall I ſay more? Some of thoſe very Men that murdered the Son of God himſelf, even *thoſe* were ſaved by *him whom they had pierced.* Never *deſpair* after *this!* Let me aſſure you, thoſe very *Sins* which cauſe you to *deſpair*, there are Saints now ſinging before God in Heaven, that once were defiled by thoſe very Sins.

Conſider.

Conſider. 4. However you may make a *Tryal*. There can be no hurt in *trying*, whether you can *turn and live*, or no. There is at leaſt, a, *who knoweth?* There is a, *who can tell?* of Salvation for you. You may ſay like the Lepers, in 2 *King.* 7. 4. *If we ſit ſtill we dye; now therefore let us go forth, if they ſave us alive, we ſhall live.* Be ſure, if you *do nothing* towards your own Salvation, *you dye.* But if you *try* to ſeek the *Face* of God, if you *try* to take the *Grace* of Chriſt, you may be *ſaved alive.* The Command, *Repent and believe the goſpel*, is to you: Now do like the Man that had the *withered hand*: Our Lord ſaid, *Stretch it out*; he *try'd* it, and he *did* it. Never *deſpair*, but make a *tryal* of what the Lord may do for you. Caſt your ſelves at his Feet, and reſolve, *If I periſh, I will periſh here.* Never, I am perſwaded, never any Soul miſcarried, that made ſuch Applications. I would ſtudy,

II. To ſolve ſome *Objections* of *Deſpairing* Souls.

Deſpair is a very unreaſonable thing; yet the *deſpairing* will pretend ſome Reaſons for it.

The Firſt Reaſon of Deſpair.

I have ſinned under great Aggravations, I have ſinned againſt Light, againſt Love, againſt Vows, and for a long while; and may I be pardoned?

A N-

ANSWER.

Thus do *you* ſay. But what ſays the Lord? in *Iſa.* 1. 18. *Though your ſins be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be as white as ſnow; though they be red like crimſon, they ſhall be as wooll.* A poor Malefactor once going to his Execution, had that Pathetical Expreſſion in his Mouth, *O, God is a great forgiver! God is a great forgiver!* Souls, *you* may find him ſo after all your *aggravated* Sins. Though you have ſinned againſt your own *knowledge*, yet it is the Character of our God, in *Exod* 34. 6. *He forgives iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin* Tho' you have ſinned againſt Gods *Mercy*, yet it is the Attribute of our God, in *Mic.* 7. 18. *He delights in pardoning of iniquity.* Perhaps you have been *ready to ſin*; but this we may be ſure of in *Neh.* 9. 17. he is a *God ready to pardon*, a God of Pardons, even full of them. Have you broken your *Vows*? Then renew them, and return to God, who then ſays in *Iſa.* 55. 7. *He will have mercy, and abundantly pardon* It may be you have maintain'd a *long War* with God; yet now at laſt lay down the Arms of Rebellion; the Lord ſays, *To day, after ſo long a time*; 'tis not yet altogether *too late.* You that are grown old, and gray, and horrible *ripe* in your evil ways, hear now that *charm* in *Jer.* 3. 1. *Thou haſt plaid the harlot with many lovers, yet return again to me, ſaith the Lord.* In the Primitive Times there was one *Victorius*, a very Old Man, converted unto Chriſtianity; the Church would

not

not receive him for ſome time; for thought they, *Old Men uſe not ſo to be converted unto God*; but he did evidence the reality of his Converſion ſo, that then they ſang Hymns upon it in the Chriſtian Aſſemblies, and it was every where ſhouted, *Victorius is become a Chriſtian!* Truly *Father*, ſuch an Acclamation may yet be made of *you*. God grant that it may be ſo.

The ſecond Reaſon of Deſpair.

I have play'd the Hypocrite *before God. I have lived a ſtranger to God, under an high profeſſion of his Name, Yea, I have eat and drank unworthily at the Table of the Lord. And is there any hope for ſuch an one as I?*

ANSWER.

Yes, if you now ſeriouſly bewail, and forſake your own *Hypocriſie*; and if you now come to a more thorough cloſure with Jeſus Chriſt. Some eminent Miniſters have been firſt *converted* by their *own* Sermons. 'Twas ſaid unto one in *Acts* 8. 21, 22. *Thy heart is not right: repent therefore of this thy wickedneſs, and pray to God.* To *you* is the charge given.

The third Reaſon of Deſpair.

I fear the Spirit of God has done ſtriving *with me, ſo hard is this heart of mine become; and then I am paſt hope for ever.*

AN-

ANSWER.

And are you indeed *afraid* of this? Are you concerned about it? That is a certain ſign that the Good Spirit is yet *ſtriving* with you. 'Tis in ſome degree a *ſoft Heart*, that feelingly complains of an *hard Heart*. The Bleſſed *Spirit* of God is at work upon you in thoſe very Troubles which you are now exerciſed with.

The fourth Reaſon of Deſpair.

I have long laboured in vain; I have prayed long, and begged long, for ſome glimpſe *of Gods good Will unto me; but he has hitherto denyed me; and is not this a ſign that I am a Reprobate?*

ANSWER.

No. But if you can *follow God in the dark*, 'tis a ſign that you are one of his Children, one of his Choſen. Can you continue crying for the Favour of God, though he ſeem to call you, *a Dog?* He will then quickly ſay, *O Soul, great is thy Faith!* Well, hold on, pray ſtill, beg ſtill. Say like him in *Luke* 5. 5. *We have toil'd all night, and have caught nothing; nevertheleſs at thy word I will let down the net* again. Who knows what the next pull may bring?

The

The fifth Reason of Despair.

I doubt I have committed the unpardonable Sin; *and then all my hope is lost for evermore.*

ANSWER.

This is a Temptation which usually persons at their *first Conversion* are troubled with. But are you indeed *fearful* of this? Then you are not *guilty* of it. Moreover, have you any value for the *Blood* of the Lord Jesus Christ? Or, would you be sorry to see the *People*, or the *Servants* of the Lord Jesus, ruined? Are you not *implacably* set against all the Interest of God? Then be of good cheer; you have been kept from the *great transgression*.

Well then, let not the clogs of this *Despair* any more obstruct your *Conversion* unto God. But I should seek,

III. To give some *Directions* to *despairing* Souls. To such, I would only say,

First, Do not *mistake*, and you need not *despair*; especially have right Thoughts about *a closure with Jesus Christ*. It is not to be supposed, that we may not lay hold on Christ by Faith, till we find such and such remarkable *degrees* of *Humiliation* in us. Those Books which tell us we *presume* if we *believe*, before we have arrived unto certain *high strains* of *Contrition* in us, will not bring us to *sincere Conversion*, but

but *ſorrowful Deſperation.* Would you have an Heart that may mourn and bleed for Sin? To cloſe with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is the way to get ſuch an Heart. We are not to tarry from Jeſus Chriſt until our Hearts are *good*; but we muſt carry what Hearts we have unto the Lord Jeſus, for the mending and changing of them.

Secondly, Though you *deſpair* never ſo much, yet uſe no *indirect courſes* in it.

In *Deſpair* ſome will, with a ſort of *Sorcery*, go to comfort or condemn themſelves. It was a great Impiety in one under *Deſpair*, to throw a Glaſs on the Ground, and ſay, *As ſure as that breaks, I am damned!* though God with infinite Compaſſion prevented the breaking of it. It is as bad for Perſons to let the Bible fall open of it ſelf, reſolving that the *firſt word* they ſee, ſhall ſettle their Opinion of themſelves. An ordinary, but an ungodly practice! The Old Heathen uſed this piece of *Witchcraft* on the Books of their *Homer* and *Virgil*. 'Tis a thing as *impious* as *perillous* to abuſe the Sacred Bible ſo.

In *Deſpair*, others with *ſelf-murder* go to deſtroy themſelves. But unto all that are hurried hereunto, I do, as *Paul* to the Jaylor, cry with a loud voice, *Do thy ſelf no harm.* Deceived Soul, as yet thou haſt a *Door of Hope*, thou may'ſt yet become an Holy and an Happy Soul, and a *Companion of the Angels* for evermore. But if thou art a *ſelf-murderer*, there is *no hope*; ſuch wicked Rebels and Fighters againſt God, go *down to the pit*, in a manner

ſo impenitent, that commonly we *cannot hope* for them. You then that are haunted with ſollicitations hereunto, hear the charge of God; go preſently, and *reveal* your Caſe to ſome Godly and Able Friend. Neither *take* nor *keep* the Devils Counſel; for you have yet *an accepted time*, yet *a day of Salvation.*

Theſe things may be ſpoken, that you may not *deſpair.* But let no Pillows be thereby ſown under the Arms of them, *whom the Lord ſays, there is no peace unto.* Let every Man *deſpair* of ever *ſeeing the Kingdom of God*, unleſs he be *born again.* Let every Man *deſpair* of eſcaping *the Worm which dyeth not, and the Fire which never ſhall be quenched*, if he do not pluck out his *Right-Eye*, and cut off his *Right-Hand* before the Lord. Read that Scripture, take that warning in *Deut.* 29. 19, 20. *If a man bleſs himſelf in his heart, and ſay, I ſhall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart: The Lord will not ſpare, but then the anger of the Lord and his jealouſie ſhall ſmoke againſt that man.* O conſider of it.

The Second USE.

Nor let any *deſpair* of Deliverance diſcourage the People of God *in their low Eſtate.*

The People of God are ſometimes in a *Babylon* of Oppreſſion and Confuſion; there is a *Myſtical Babylon* in the World. Here the People of God ſometimes lye under ſuch diſadvantages, that they ſay, *Our Bones are dryed, our Hope is loſt.* Yet be of good courage; for,

Thus

Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves. The People of God are delivered at a time when there could be least expectation of it. It will be when we our selves are at the *lowest ebb* of Distress; when we are come, *Nullam sperare salutem*; when *Isaac* is on the Altar, bound; when we have *none stout up or left.* Then, then it is that God appears to save. 'Tis said in *Psal.* 12. 5. *For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety.* 'Twas thus when the *Reformation* began. All *Christendom* was then covered with an Hell of Ignorance and Barbarity. At that time, what was done for the Church of God, in *England* particularly, made a Foreigner say of it, *The past Ages despaired of it, the present Age does admire it, the future Ages will be astonished at it.*' Such things are done by God for his People when they say of themselves, *We are brought very low!* And it will be when our Enemies are at the *highest flood* of Insolence and Wickedness. When *Pharaoh* said, *I will pursue them into the wilderness, I will overtake them, I will divide the spoil, my lust shall be satisfied upon them,* then was the *Leviathan* soon given *for meat unto the people inhabiting the wilderness.* When the *Scarlet Whore* brags, *I shall see no sorrow,* then 'tis that *all her plagues* come at once. 'Twas said in *Nah.* 1. 11. *While they be folden together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry.* Mark, when ill Men have so closely and aptly laid their matters, that like *folded thorns*

they may prick all about them, and yet never fear to be *taken asunder*; when they have their *Drunken Cabals*, and are further *drunk* with Confidence and Security, then it is that the consuming Wrath of God falls upon them. The surly Captains that cry'd, *Come down, thou Man of God, come down quickly!* instead thereof, they felt the *Fire of God* come down upon them. Thus, when Men are come to say, *Come down Churches!* or *come down Sermons!* or *come down Ministers, come down quickly*; then the Great God will *quickly* bring his Fiery Thundering Plagues upon them. Such Men, did they make a *right use* of their Bibles, they could not but be terrified by that Word of God, in *Jer.* 5. 28. *Among my people are found wicked men; they set a trap, they catch men: As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit, therefore they are become great, and waxen rich.* It follows, *Saith the Lord, shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?* Well then,

In the worst of Times and Things, let the thought of this incourage *Faith* and *Prayer*, and let Patience also upon this account have its *perfect work*: Leave all *Vengeance* to the Lord. Let us *wait on the Lord, and keep his way.* Let us *wait on the Lord, and be of good courage: Wait, I say, on the Lord.*

Honey

Honey at the end of the Rod:

OR,

Help for the Internal Diſtempers with which External Afflictions are uſually accompanied.

HEB. xii. 5.

My Son, Deſpiſe not thou the Chaſtening of the Lord, nor Faint when thou art Rebuked of Him.

THE World has never yet ſeen the Day, ſince the Sin and Fall of our unhappy Father, wherein any Man alive had not cauſe to ſay, like him in *Lam.* 3. 1. *I am the Man that hath ſeen Affliction.* But the World is

now plunged into that Age, wherein *perilous Times* do put some special Accents, both of *Bitterness* and *Frequency*, upon that *Affliction* which Mankind is exposed unto. And that little part of the World, unto which we belong, encounters with such complicated *Judgments* of Heaven, as render *Affliction* yet further considerable among our selves. 'Tis no little *Affliction*, that *Sword*, and *Plague*, and *Fire*, at once coming upon a poor People must needs be the occasion of. Hence 'tis, that some Afflicted Persons are mourning over their sickly *Bodies*, and making the Complaint of *Job*, *Wearisome Nights are appointed unto me, my Skin is broken and become loathsome.* Some Afflicted Persons are mourning over their broken *Estates*, and sighing the Complaint of *Naomi*, *I am become Empty.* And not a few, are weeping over their departed *Friends* from Day to Day. One wrings her Hands, like the Distressed Widow that came to *Elisha*, saying, *Thy Servant my Husband is Dead.* Another laments his being in the condition of *Ezekiel*, having *lost the Desire of his Eyes with a stroke.* Here you shall hear the Moans of an *Orphan*, saying like *David*, *My Father and my Mother do forsake me.* And there you shall see bereaved Parents, in the posture of *Rachel*, *weeping for their Children, and refusing to be comforted for their Children, because they are not.* But, behold in these Words a counsel proper for all these *Children of Affliction.* It is in this very Text intimated unto us, That the God of Heaven has in the *Scripture of Truth* made provision for the *direction* of them that shall be in *affliction*, and that our *miscar-*

riage

riage in *affliction* proceeds from our not remembring and regarding of this *all profitable* Word. I know not whether there be any one thing of a greater Figure in a *Christian Conversation*, than the right bearing of *affliction*; and the Text now before us, will assist us to discourse upon that blessed Skill.

One of the best *Preachers* and *Writers* that ever lived, is under the *Inspiration of the Almighty* here making some *Use* of the *Doctrine* delivered by him in the former part of his Epistle to the *Christianised*, but *Apostatising* Hebrewes; and indeed, *that* was the usual Method of his Holy Sermons. The Apostolical *Exhortation* in our Context, is, unto a patient perseverance under all the *afflictions* which our profession of Christianity may be attended with; and several, weighty, pungent Arguments, do in our Context press that *Exhortation*. One of those Arguments is contained in the Verse now read unto us; 'Tis drawn, from the Gracious Design of God, in all those *afflictions* which he doth exercise us with. All the *afflictions* that we are squeez'd withal, whether we consider them on *our part*, or on *Gods part*, they carry in them very charming Characters. On *our part*, our *afflictions* come as *witnesses*; they are to witness our being those *Children*, whose *Nurture* the Great God is very careful of. On *Gods part*, our *afflictions* come as *chastisements*; they are to *chastise* us into that *holiness*, and *fruitfulness*, which the God of Heaven is well-pleased with. All of this is insinuated unto us in our Text; which is, *My Son, despise not the chastning of the Lord,*

nor faint when rebuked of him. Before I give you thoſe Remarks, which I am to make upon this Golden Sentence, you muſt let me mind you of thoſe that are here made by the Apoſtle *Paul* himſelf. The Text is a Quotation of what fell from the Pen of *Solomon* Hundreds of Years before, in *Prov.* 3. 11. *My ſon, deſpiſe not the chaſtening of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction* The Apoſtle obſerves, That it is an *Exhortation*, which may alſo be rendred, a *Conſolation*; there is indeed *Comfort* as well as *Counſel* contained in it. He again obſerves, That it *ſpeaks*; no part of the Bible is to be a *dumb* or a *dead* Letter to us; there is a *Voice* in every Line of it. He alſo obſerves, That it *ſpeaks* to *us*; The Oracles of the Bible, though they were at firſt more immediately directed unto theſe or thoſe, that are now dead and gone, yet *we* ſhould count *our* ſelves as intimately concerned therein, as if *we* were by Name Addreſſed in them. He likewiſe obſerves, That it ſpeaks to us, as to *Children*. It is in the Quality of a *Father* that our God *afflicts* us from time to time; and it becomes us to maintain the Frames and Hopes of *Children* under ſuch Fatherly Diſpenſations. He furthermore obſerves, That our *Afflictions* are both *Chaſtenings* and *Rebukes* of God upon us; they are *Chaſtenings*, which implies *Corrections* with *Inſtructions* to our Souls; they are alſo *Rebukes*, which implies *Convictions* of what is a miſs in us; in ſhort, they are but parts of the *Liberal Education* which our Heavenly Father beſtows upon us. I may ſafely tell you, that all theſe are *Notes* which the Apoſtle *Paul* himſelf would

would have made upon this Text, if he had been to have given you a Sermon upon it; for I find them lying plainly before us here. 'Tis therefore no ill husbandry of the Hour now running, to take notice of *those* Observations; but there is one more which the Apostle would leave *us* to Raise. 'Tis, That there are two *Distempers* which we should under all *Afflictions* be concern'd for the avoiding of; that in all our *Afflictions* we should keep up a Temper, both in our *Courage* and in our *Patience*; that in our *Afflictions*, there is a *despising*, which is an Excess, or an Error on the *Right Hand*, and there is a *desponding*, which is a Defect, or an Error on the *Left Hand*, very Religiously to be watched against. In fine, This is the Observation which we have to insist upon,

That on the one side a *despising* of, on the other side, a *desponding* at, Afflictions, is an Evil which 'tis our Duty carefully to avoid.

Behold now incumbent on us a double Duty, with reference to those *Afflictions* which in an evil World we meet withal.

I. It must be our study to avoid the *despising* of *Afflictions*. We must not sleight them, contemn them, disregard them, or treat them as if we were not concerned in them; but a positive Respect unto them, is also required of us.

First. It is our Duty to be affectionately sensible of the Blows, which by Afflictions are given

given to us: A *quick ſenſe* uſually accompanies the Grace of God in the Heart of Man. A ſtupid, and a ſottiſh Temper under *Afflictions*, is very contrary to the Expectations of the Lord our God; a *Stoical Apathy* is no *Chriſtian Vertue*; but it is mentioned as a great provocation, in *Jer* 5. 3. *O Lord, Thou haſt ſtricken them, but they have not grieved.* Our God has beſtowed *Affections* upon us, and He expects that they ſhould be ſuitably moved by ſuch *Afflictions* as He ſhall viſit us withal. We muſt not receive the *Blowes* of God, like a *Stock fiſh*, without any feeling of them; but every afflicted Man ſhould with ſome ſenſible Paſſions feel, *This is a ſore Chaſtening and Rebuke upon me.* It was brought in as a ſad Indictment againſt that inſenſible People, in *Iſa.* 42. 25. *The fire burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.* For Afflictions to come and *burn* us out of our Enjoyments, and yet for us to keep *Hearts* untouch'd with a ſenſe of what has befallen us, is to *deſpiſe the Chaſtening of the Lord.* It is to put off *Humanity* it ſelf; and, I pray, what Rule have we in *Divinity* for doing ſo? We ſhould have our penſive Reſentments of our *Afflictions*, whether we look upon them as *natural* or as *penal* Evils. There never was a ſtouter Hero than *David*, who yet melted into Tears when he ſaw the Frowns of God upon him. When one was taken with a *Diſtemper*, that had ſome reſemblance to the *Small Pox*, it was ſaid of her, in *Numb.* 12. 14. *If her Father had ſpit in her Face, ſhould ſhe not be aſhamed?* Thus ought we to entertain our *Afflictions*, as things that are to humble

humble us, and abaſe us before the Lord. There is a *comfortable Order* of our Conditions and Circumſtances, which God himſelf has implanted into us the deſires of; this Order is invaded and diſturbed by all of our *Afflictions*; and it is a Sin for us now to ſtupifie our juſt Apprehenſions hereof, by ſaying, *Well, It can't be help'd*; and, *There's an end on't*; or by uſing the *Cauteries* which were the Common Reliefs of the Ancient Heathen, in their Diſtreſſes; this is, as one ſays, to have in our Souls a *Calm*, like that of the *Dead Sea*; 'tis indeed a *Calm* with a *Curſe*.

Secondly. It is our Duty to be awfully ſenſible of the *Hand* from which *Afflictions* come unto us. We muſt not reckon our Affliction to be meer *caſual Events*, or the Effects of *Injuſtice* and *Injury* from our Neighbours; but we are to think, as in *Amos* 3. 6. *Shall there be Evil in the City, and the Lord hath not done it?* No, There ſhall not be ſo much as an Houſe in all the Town robbed or burned, but there ſhall be a *doing* of the Lord about it. In our *Afflictions*, we muſt look beyond *Second Cauſes*, and believe the *Providence* of the Great God about them all, and lay with our ſelves, *I have to do with God in all of theſe Calamities.* Many in their Afflictions only *look downward*; but we are to caſt our Eyes another way, and *look upward*, that we may ſee the Original of all our Troubles; and we are to think, like him in *Job*; *Affliction comes not forth of the Duſt, neither doth Trouble ſpring out of the Ground.* It may be that *Affliction* has laid

our

our delights in the Duſt, and in the *ground*, yet we muſt not think the *Affliction* proceeds from ſo *low* a cauſe. In all our *loſſes*, it becomes us to ſay with him of old, *The Lord has taken away*; and in all the *wrongs* that have been done unto us, we ſhould ſay with him, *'Tis God has bidden it.* Though the *Arrows* of Affliction that are ſhot at us, do ſeem to come never ſo much *at a venture*, yet we muſt perſwade our ſelves that the *Hand* of God has the directing of them. *Afflicted* Men do often ſay, 'twas their *Fortune* to meet with ſuch or ſuch a diſaſter; *thy Fortune*, Man; for ſhame, take not the Name of that *Idol* into thy Mouth. We may not aſcribe unto a *blind chance* any of thoſe Afflictions which our affairs are crippled with. Although the *Hand* of God in our Afflictions be wrapt up in a Cloud, yet ſhould the ſight of our Souls penetrate unto it; and God ſhould not be concealed from us by the crowd of immediate *Agents*, which are the Inſtruments of our Vexations.

Thirdly, It is our Duty to be Piouſly ſenſible of the *end* for which *Afflictions* come upon us. We muſt imagine that our *Afflictions* are managed by the All-Wiſe God, with ſome aim at our amendment and improvement; and we ſhould often aſk, like her of old, *Wey am I thus?* 'Tis the Command in *Mic.* 6. 9. *Hear the rod.* We are to think that there is a loud *call* and *voice* of God in every *Rod* with which he does afflict us; we ſhould labour to *know*, and labour to *do* thoſe things about which our *Afflictions* are the *Monitors* of our God unto us. In all Afflictions we

we ſhould ſeriouſly requeſt, like him in *Job* 10. 3. *Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me.* We ſhould inquire what *Sin* our *Afflictions* come to correct us for? and we ſhould preſently ſet upon a thorough *Repentance* of that *evil way*; we ſhould preſently ſtone that *Achan* which has been the *Troubler* of us; and we ſhould preſently caſt over the Wall the Head of that *Sheba* which has cauſed the Armies of Heaven to beleagure us. We ſhould inquire what *good* our *Afflictions* come to excite us to? And we ſhould preſently ſet upon the expreſſing of that *Grace* and the performing of that *work*, which we find our ſelves now under a new obligation to; we ſhould preſently bring forth ſuch *Fruits* as all our prunings and purgings are deſigned for. If our *Afflictions* produce not ſuch things as theſe upon us, they are but like ſtripes beſtow'd upon the Hide of *a wild Aſſes Colt*. Never was there a ſadder or a blacker brand upon a miſerable Man, than that in 2 *Chron.* 28. 22. *In the time of his diſtreſs did he treſpaſs yet more againſt the Lord.* And there never was a more doleful ſight in the World, than that of *a Thief on the Croſs continuing his malignity againſt the Son of God.* Would you hear what is *meet* for us under our Afflictions? I'll tell you then, in the beſt words that can be ſpoken; I mean thoſe in *Job* 34. 31. *Surely it is meet to be ſaid unto God, I have born chaſtiſement, I will not offend any more.* If we do not thus behave our ſelves under our *Affliction*, we *deſpiſe the chaſtning of the Lord.* But this is not all our Duty; *pars ſupereſt.*

II. It

II. It must also be our study to avoid the *desponding* at *Afflictions*. Our Souls must not suffer any *dissolution* by them; nor must we suffer our selves to be thereby *relaxed* into the disorders of Impatience. But more positively and particularly.

First, It is our Duty to undergo *Afflictions* with a submissive *Contentation* of Soul. We must keep our Souls from those *Deliquia ac Delitia*, those wretched *swoonings* which Afflictions may dispose us unto. But how? 'Tis said in *Luke* 21. 19. *In your patience possess ye your souls.* There is a sinful *Patience*, which renders the Soul a *Galley-slave*, there is a Brutal *Patience* which renders the Soul an *Issachar*, under all Afflictions; and there is a Moral Bravery which *Pagans* have sometimes born their Trials with. But our Lord says, *You must have* [*your*] *Patience*; 'tis a *Christian* Patience, which we are to be studious of. Under Afflictions, we have these Two comprehensive Things to do, for the *contenting* of us; both of them intimated in *Psal.* 39. 9.

1. Under Afflictions we are to suppress all *Tumultuous Discomposures* in our selves; there is an Holy *Silence* which we are now to command our selves into. Our God says to us, as to the disconsolate Parent in *Jer.* 31. 16. *Refrain thy Voice from weeping, and thine Eyes from Tears.* Be not immoderate in any of thy Lamentations. There are Discomposures of *Tongue* which are now to be restrained. In our Afflictions we must

must beware of hasty *Wishes*; we may not now fly out into the Distemper of *Elijah*, when he was e'en tired with his Troubles, and said, *It is enough*; *now, O Lord, take away my Life.* Nor may we now fall into the Distemper of *Job*, when he saw that he was not enough pitied by his Neighbours, *May their Soul be in my Souls stead.* In our Afflictions we must beware of hasty *Censures* too. We may not now Fret at *God*, like those distressed ones whom the Prophet compares to *Wild Bulls in a Net, filled with the Fury of the Lord.* Nor may we now Rail at *Man*, like the Raging *Israelites* in the Wilderness, crying out upon *Moses*, as the Authour of all the Destruction that came upon them. There are likewise Discompostures of *Heart*, which are now to be Restrained. Sayes the Apostle, *I would have you without Distraction*; there are *Cares* and *Griefs* which wonderfully *distract* the Souls of them [like an Army in a Rout] that cross Accidents come tumbling in upon. We must not suffer our Souls to be *distracted* or *divided* into incoherent Motions as may unfit us for Communion with the Lord our God. We must not like *David* once upon the loss of a *Son*, lay the Reins upon the Necks of the *Wild-Beasts* that are within us; but we must come to such a Quietness and Settlement of our Souls, as the sorrowful *Hannah* had, when she had *poured out her Soul unto the Lord.* And then, under our Afflictions we must fetch all our *Peace* from our Converse with the Blessed God in all His *Attributes*; we must quell our own unruliness by remembring, *'Tis God that has done all*

that

that I feel. 'Tis the Sight of God that muſt allay all the Madneſs and Foaming which we now find our ſelves prone unto; thus *Moſes* in *Heb.* 11. 27. *Endured, as ſeeing him who is Inviſible.* We ſhould keep our Souls in Order, by having our Eyes upon the *Sovereignty* of God. We muſt confeſs, as in *Job* 9. 12. *None may ſay to Him, What doſt thou?* And for this Reaſon, we ſhould have no ſecret Clamours in our Souls, when he goes to meddle with any of our Darlings; we muſt have no *Meum* and *Tuum* in our Tranſactions with God, but let Him take all, becauſe as *David* ſaid once of his Riches, *Lord, All of thin is Thine alone.* We ſhould likewiſe keep our Souls in Order, by having our Eyes upon the *Righteouſneſs* of God. We muſt confeſs, as in *Neh.* 9. 33. *Thou art Juſt in all that is brought upon us. for thou haſt done Right, but we have done wickedly:* and for this Reaſon we ſhould be free from all Murmurings at what comes upon us. In the worſt of our Difficulties, we ſhould call to mind, *My own Doings have procured theſe things unto me!* and ſay, *Why ſhould any Man alive complain of the puniſhment of his Iniquities?* We ſhould moreover, Eye the *Wiſdom* of God, for the Calming our Souls. We muſt confeſs with him in *Pſal.* 119. 175. *Thou in Faithfulneſs haſt Afflicted me.* And therefore we ſhould perſwade our ſelves, that the Faithful God is but fulfilling of his Covenant in all the Inconveniencies that may befal us; that He can *bring forth Meat out of the Eater*, and that we *now know not what He does, but we may hereafter.* We ſhould furthermore Eye the *Goodneſs* of God for the

the composing of our Spirits in our saddest Hours. We are to confess with him in *Psal.* 119. 71. *It is good for me, that I have been afflicted.* And hence, we should humbly conceive that we shall not be losers by any of our Mishaps; but that our God will *try us and prove us, to do us good in the latter end:* And we should impute all to *love*, think, *'Tis because God loves me, that he does rebuke and chasten me.* Finally, We should Eye the *Fulness* of God, for the rectifying of what wild Thoughts we may have about our Miseries. We should hear the God of Heaven saying to us, as in *Gen.* 17. 1. *I am the All-sufficient God.* And hence, we should in the absence and withdrawing of all other things, yet satisfie our selves by this, *God is my portion still, and He is All, and infinitely more than All.*

Secondly. 'Tis our Duty to undergo *Afflictions* with a believing *Expectation* of Soul. When we are never so much *disquieted*, yet are we to lay that Charge upon our selves, in *Psal.* 43. 5. *O my Soul, hope in God, for I shall yet praise him.* An *Affliction*, though it bear never so hard upon us, yet it should not kill our *hope in God* for the good issue of it. In the midst of all our Lamentations we should still be of that Principle, in *Lam.* 3. 26. *It is good that a man should hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of God.* An hopeless *Despair* in Affliction, is the *fainting* of the Soul: An afflicted Man should still keep alive Two Expectations. One thing to be expected by him, is that in *Psal.* 126. 5. *They that sow in Tears shall reap in Joy.* We should expect, That the

Clouds will one Day blow over, and that we ſhall one Day be at reſt from the Loads that now lie upon us: And ſuppoſe we, *Non ſi male nunc, & olim ſic erit* ; --but, that as it is ſaid, *The Lord will not always chide.* Another thing to be expected is, that in 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. *Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* We ſhould expect, That we ſhall be *Gainers* by all our Sorrows; and we ſhould ſay of our ſelves, as one of the Martyrs did, *My God is now ſcouring of me, that He may ſet me among His Veſſels of Honour, on an High Shelf in Heaven for ever*; and we ſhould ſay to our ſelves, as another of the Martyrs did, *Hold out, O my Faith and Patience, hold out a little more, and Heaven will quickly make amends for all.*

Thirdly, 'Tis our Duty to undergo *Afflictions* with a Gracious *Reſolution* of Soul. We ſhould not by *Affliction* be diſcouraged in *Devotion*, but ſay with a Noble Zeal, as he in *Job* 13. 15. *Though He ſlay me, yet will I truſt in Him.* Whatever *Afflictions* overtake us, we ſhould ſtill *cleave*, as *Barnabas* expreſſed it, *with full purpoſe of Heart unto the Lord*; and we ſhould be able ſtill to ſay like them, in *Pſal.* 44. 17, 18. *All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, O Lord.* We ſhould be reſolved for the Service of God, though the *Wrath* of *Man* ſhould moleſt us in it. *Cain's* Club ſhould not make us at all abate of our *ſacrificing* to the Lord: Though the Perſecutors keep roaring like ſo many *Lions* and *Leopards* upon us, yet ſhould we reſolve like him,

him. *As for me and my House we will serve the Lord.* And we should be resolved for the Service of God, though the *Rod* of God Himself should be never so severely lashing of us. Tho our *Inward Man* should be never so much hurtled with the Terrours of God, yet should we resolve, *I will fear the Lord, and obey His Voice, though I must walk in darkness, and see no light.* Though our *Outward Man* should be never so much distressed by the strokes of God upon us, yet we should resolve, *I will be moved by none of these things from Endeavours to finish my Course with joy.* We should resolve, That for us to *Live is to be Christ*, although our *Lives* are never so much embittered by pining and pining *Sicknesses*. We should resolve, That we will be *rich in good Works*, though it be our portion to be *the Poor of this World*. We should resolve, That we will do all we can to Honour the *Name* of God, though our *Name* should have never so much *Reproach* cast upon it. And we should resolve, That whatever *Crosses* we have in our *Children* or our *Servants*, yet we will be dutiful *Servants* and *Children* to the Lord our God.

Thus we *Faint not* when *Rebuked* of Him.

APPLICATION.

And now, Let the *Afflicted* in this Assembly, attend unto the *Exhortation that speaks unto us all.* Christians, You have been *suffering* a thousand other things; I pray, now *suffer a Word of Exhortation.*

I. Be not faulty in *deſpiſing* of your *Afflictions*; but ſo bear them as to be the *better* for them. You have been *ſmitten* with multiply'd Impreſſions from the Hand of God upon you; but O let it not be ſaid of you, as in *Jer.* 2. 30. *In vain have I ſmitten them, they have received no correction.* The Errand of all your *Afflictions* is to bring you unto greater meaſures of *Holineſs* and *Righteouſneſs* than you have been heretofore us'd unto. *Deſpiſe* not theſe Meſſengers of Heaven, ſo as to ſend them away without their Errand.

Conſider, *Firſt.*

If your are not the *better* for your *Afflictions*, 'tis a ſign that you are very *bad* indeed! There is an obſtinate *Stupidity*, in that Soul, which Afflictions will not awaken to Repentance. 'Tis from the Hardneſs of our Hearts, that we ſhould need any Afflictions to reduce us from our Evil Ways; that the ſweet Invitations of the Goſpel will not operate ſo far upon us as to bring us home to our God; that He muſt uſe *Briars* and *Thorns* upon us, before we can be taught *what an evil and a bitter thing it is to forſake the Lord.* But for a Man to go on in ſin, after that Affliction has been employ'd upon him, this truly is a more abominable Hardneſs. We may ſay of ſuch doleful unreclaimable Creatures, as in *Zech.* 7. 12. *They have made their Hearts, as an Adamant Stone, and there is great Wrath upon them.* We read concerning the *Word* of God, *That it is an Hammer which breaks the Rocks to pieces.* But what an Heart

haſt

haſt thou, to make light of *Words*, yea, and of *Wounds* too proceeding from the Eternal God; verily. The *Nether Milſtone* has no ſuch Impenetrable Hardneſs in it. What a Monſter of a Man, was *Hiel* the Builder of *Jerico!* of whom we read, in 1 *King.* 16. 34. That when he begun his Wickedneſs, God killed one of his *Children*; but he went on, and then God killed another of his *Children*; yet he gave not over, till at laſt the Moſt High God had cut off all his Family. Hearken to this, You that continue in your Sins, albeit one Affliction after another has been plaguing of you; You are like that wicked *Hiel*, the Prodigies of the World. Yea, Let me go on to ſay, There is a *Deviliſh Obſtinacy* in the Soul, whom Afflictions do not good unto. It has been ſaid, *Perſeverare in peccato eſt Diabolicum*; But what a Degree of *Devilliſm* then is it for a Man to perſevere in his Impieties after he has been Afflicted for them? 'Tis the Malignity of the *Devils* in Hell; the foul Fiends of Darkneſs, are Tormented for their *Enmity* to God, and yet they go about with horrible fiery Chains of Guilt upon them, *Confirmed* in that Curſed *Enmity*. You that will continue in *Rebellion* againſt God, notwithſtanding all your *Afflictions* from Him, I pray, whom do you take for your *Father* in this your Obduratenes? May it not be ſaid, as in *John* 8. 44. *Ye are of your Father, the Devil:* for it? What a *Devil* was that Roman Emperour, who as often as God *Thundered* over his Head, would with his Fire-works *Thunder* back again? Why, All your Impenitency under Affliction, is but a

Thundering back upon the omnipotent God, when he is threatning to destroy you by the terrible *Thunder of his Power*. O consider of it! And

Consider, *Secondly*,

If you are not the *better* for you *past* Afflictions, the Almighty God has yet *more* and *worse*, than those to inflict upon you. You must not think that God has already spent all his *Arrows*. Even in *this Life* there are sorer Plagues which God may have reserved for you, if you make light of what you have already felt; He will heat the Furnace of his Vengeance yet *seven times hotter* for you. This is what he says in *Lev.* 26. 23, 24. *If ye will not be reformed by these things, I will punish you yet seven times more for your sins*. Says the Lord, If *Rods* won't cure that Sinner, I'll try what *Scorpions* will do upon him. First, the Man has had Losses by *Sea*; if he remain as worldly and woful a Creature as he was before, then says God, *I'll burn his House for him*; if he remain still the same, then says God, *I'll go feed the Worms with the dearest Friends he has in the World*; if he remain still what he was, then says God, *I'll kill him, I'll never suffer any Ground of mine to be cumbered by such a Wretch as he*. Just as *Pharaoh*, so is many a Sinner, follow'd with Plague after Plague; but if nothing do obtain, then as it was said of old, *The wrath of the Lord arises, till there is no remedy*. And there are the Plagues of *another World* in store, to be then heaped upon them that made light of what they endured here. 'Tis possible that God may give you a respite

from

from his Judgments; as a Parent that has tryed all means for the recovery of a prodigal Son, at length gives him over to his full Swinge in all manner of Baſeneſs; thus does God often ſay over a deſperate Sinner, as in *Iſa.* 1. 5. *Why ſhould you be ſtricken any more! ye will revolt more and more.* But this is only a diſmal Preſage of a final Ruine at hand, for ſuch a forlorn Soul. The next News will be, *In Hell he lifts up his Eyes, and crys out, I am tormented here!* But you that are groaning under Afflictions, take this Warning of the Lord; If you do not now *turn to him that ſmites you*, all thoſe Afflictions are but like the Irons and Hardſhips of a Priſon upon a wretched Malefactor, going before a far more terrible Execution: Your preſent Miſeries are *but the Beginnings of Sorrows. Behold, ye Deſpiſers, and wonder*, and be reduced.

II. And on the other hand, Be not guilty of *deſponding* at your *Afflictions*; but bear them with ſuch a *Patience* as will be proper for you. Let none of your Exerciſes drive you into the fumes of Diſcontent; but according to that in *Jam.* 1. 4. *Let patience have its perfect work.* Oh be not ſo *faint* in any of your Afflictions, as to fall out with God, or to diſcover the feebleneſs of your Minds, by your inability to *encounter* them. One that was tortured with grinding pains, gave that account of himſelf to them that asked him, How he did, *I Groan, but I do not Grumble.* You may *mourn* in your Afflictions; but O do not *murmur*; I beſeech you not a word of *that!* Let me ſet before you a few Things, that may ſerve

ſerve as *Cordials*, to keep you from *fainting* in your Afflictions.

Conſider, *Firſt*;

All your *Afflictions* are indeed your *Advantages*. 'Tis a ſweet Promiſe that you have to feed upon, in *Rom.* 8. 28. *All things ſhall work together for good, unto them that love God.* Be your Afflictions never ſo many, and never ſo heavy, what are they? They are but *Viſitations*; thus the Oracles of God have called them; they are the *Friendly Viſits* of God unto your Souls. 'Tis a *dark* Time with you; but what ſays the Pſalmiſt, in *Pſalm* 112. 4. *Unto the upright there ariſeth Light in Darkneſs.* Theſe troubleſome Afflictions of yours, they are to promote your *Knowledge*; they are but the *clay and ſpittle* to open thoſe Eyes, that Sin has blinded. Certain *bitter Herbs* are good for the Eye-ſight. They are alſo to promote your *Vertue*; they are but the *Phyſic*, of which I may ſay, *Hereby Iniquity is purged, and their Fruit is to take away Sin*; they do but keep you near the *Fire*, that you may be the better in Tune for the Work of God. It was a pittiful Outcry made by Good old *Jacob*, when he parted with his Children, in *Gen.* 42. 36. *All theſe things are againſt me.* But, Good Sir, you had *periſhed*, if it had not been for *theſe very Things*; and it came afterwards to be acknowledged, in *Gen.* 50. 20. *God meant it unto Good.* The *Rod* of God, which now afflicts you, 'twill be like *Aarons* Rod; you'l find upon it, thoſe precious *Bloſſoms*, which will

will one Day cauſe you to ſay, *I would not for a World have been without that Affliction!*

Conſider, *Secondly.*

Notwithſtanding all your *Afflictions*, you have enough to make you compleatly happy and bleſſed for ever. Though you may want this and that Fine Thing in the World, yet you may ſay, as in *Pſal.* 116. 7. *Return to thy Reſt, O my Soul; for the Lord has dealt bountifully with thee.* O pauſe a little. Has not God given you his Grace? Don't you find your Hearts Touched with ſincere Inclinations to what is *Holy and Juſt and Good?* Well then, you have the *True Riches*; one Drachm of *Grace* is worth all the *Riches* in the World. Again, Has not God given you his *Chriſt?* Have not you felt your Souls cloſing with him, as your *Prince* and your *Saviour?* Well then, you have him, *in whom all fulneſs dwells. One Chriſt* will weigh down *Ten Worlds.* In a word, Is not God *yours?* As the Courtier ſaid unto his Companion, *Don't complain of any hard hap, ſo long as thou haſt* Cæſar *for thy Friend.* So let me ſay, *Never complain of Affliction, while God is yours.* If you can ſay, *The Lord is my portion*, then, be your Afflictions what they will, you may alſo ſay, *I have a goodly Heritage.*

Conſider,

Conſider, *Thirdly.*

Though your *Afflictions* have never ſuch Aggravations in them, yet they might have been infinitely worſe than they are. I beſeech you, to make a Compariſon.

Compare your *Afflictions* with your *Deſervings.* You muſt own before the Lord, as in *Ezr* 9. 13. *Lord, Thou haſt puniſhed us leſs than our Iniquities deſerve.* Though your *Afflictions* have bereaved you of this and that *pleaſant Thing*, yet you have a thouſand ſuch Things left about you ſtill; you have not *loſt All*; although we are all unworthy to have any thing at all. A pious Mother, having one of her two Children ſuddenly drowned, preſently took up the ſurviving one, and ſaid, *Bleſſed be God that has left me This!* Why, if any thing be *left*, it is more than we are worthy of. But ſuppoſe, *All gone*; What ſhall we ſay *then?* Why, Then I ſay, yet, Man, *Thou art out of Hell.* Thou art worthy to be broken in the place of Dragons, worthy to have all the Scalding Lead that is in the Cup of Gods horrible Vengeance poured all down into thy ſinful Bowels for ever; and ſhall a little *Flea bite* now ſet thee a Roaring before the Lord?

Again, Compare your *Afflictions* with *thoſe* of other and Better Men. You may ſee Thouſands in the World, that never ſinned againſt God, ſo much as you; and yet, I believe, you would

would be loath to *change places* with them. I'll repeat an Antient Propoſal unto you that cry out of your Afflictions, *I cannot bear them*; That which I propound is, That all the *Afflictions* of Mankind might be brought and laid in one *Common Heap*, and that you may only come and have your *equal Share* with the reſt in the World: Would *this* pleaſe you? Alas! This would make you much more calamitous than you are. 'Tis a Paſſage in *Jam.* 5. 11. *Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and ſeen the end of the Lord.* Some think, that a Couple of Examples are there offered unto us; *q. d.* You have indeed *heard*, how patient *Job* was; but you have *ſeen* a more perfect Copy than him, for you to write after; you have ſeen how *patient* the *Lord* Jeſus was, and what a patient *End* he made at *Jeruſalem* a few Years ago. So let me ſay; What are you better than *Job*? And yet what one *Affliction* have *you*, that *Job* had not experience of? Tell me *one*, if you can. But, *behold, a greater than Job!* Was not the Lord Jeſus perfectly *Holy* and *Harmleſs* and *Undefiled*! and yet what amazing *Afflictions* did befal him! Was there any Dolour omitted in them, that the Fury of *Heaven*, or *Earth*, or *Hell* could put into his Cup? O then, do not ſink under that little *Splinter* of a Croſs, that is now laid upon you.

Conſider,

Conſider, *Fourthly.*

The manifold Evil of giving way to our unruly and unquiet Spirit, in our *Afflictions*, is enough to fright us into Moderation. 'Tis ſaid, in *Prov.* 4. 10. *If thou faint in the day of adverſity, thy ſtrength is ſmall.* So indeed it is; but I have a worſe thing alſo to ſay of it; namely this, *Thy Sin is great.* It argues a fearful deal of *Corruption* in us, when *Affliction* on us is not born with much Reſignation of Soul. You find in *Jude* 15. in that one Verſe, there is *Ungodlineſs* at leaſt four times over-charged upon ſinful Men; and, What is the Deſcription of theſe *ungodly* ones? It follows, *Theſe are Murmurers, Complainers.* Truly, there is a world of *ungodlineſs* in our *Murmurings* and *Complainings* under our Afflictions. When the *Iſraelites* had been *murmuring* and *complaining* under the Fatigues of the Wilderneſs, it is added in *Num.* 17. 10. *Aarons Rod was kept for a Token againſt the Rebels.* Why, there is a curſed *Rebellion* that *murmuring* and *complaining* which our Afflicted Spirits do often *faint* into. 'Tis below a Chriſtian. I remember, *Plutarch* reports of a certain People, who if they ſaw a Man over-much dejected with any Affliction, condemned him to wear the Habit of a *Woman* all his Days; becauſe that ſuch an one did, as it were, *unman* himſelf. Even ſo, They that are unable to bear Affliction, do, in a ſort, *unchriſtianize* themſelves; 'tis not fit you ſhould wear the Badge of a *Chriſtian*, till you know what it is to lye ſtill, when the

the Heavenly Chirurgeon is lancing of you. In ſhort, By this *Faintneſs* you undo all your *Prayers*. I ſuppoſe, you do not uſe the *Lords-prayer*, as the *Form* of your Devotions; yet you muſt make it the *Rule* of them. But, as Father *Latymer* ſpeaking of *Peter*'s denying his Lord, had this Note upon it, *Peter* forgot his *Pater Noſter*; for that was, *Hallowed be thy Name*, and *Thy Kingdom come*: So may it be ſaid now to us, You forget your *Prayer*; your Prayer is, *Thy Will be done*; and yet, when you ſee that *Will done*, you *faint* under it, as if you were your ſelves *undone*. I know not what your *other* Afflictions are, but this I affirm, Your *fainting* under thoſe Afflictions, is a greater Affliction it ſelf, than any of the reſt. It is that horrible Plague whereof we read in *Prov.* 18. 14. *The ſpirit of a man ſhall ſuſtain his infirmity, but a wounded ſpirit who can bear?* Cheer up then, my Afflicted Neighbours; be of a good Heart; be *faithful*, and not *fainting* in all your Afflictions; and receive that Advice from God this Day, in *Deut.* 8. 5. *Thou ſhalt conſider in thy Heart, that as a Man chaſtens his Son, ſo the Lord thy God chaſtens thee.*

The

The Golden Curb:

OR,

Sober Checks given to Raſh Paſſions.

2 SAM. xix. 29.

I have ſaid, Thou and Ziba divide the Land.

AND I muſt endeavour to *perſwade* you, as I do my ſelf *believe*, That he *ſaid* very well: I am ſorry to ſee what hard Thoughts are commonly taken up, concerning the Holy *David*, for paſſing ſuch a Sentence as has now been read unto us. You know, That when *David* was flying before the General Sedition and Rebellion of the People under wicked *Abſalom*, one *Ziba*, a crafty Perſon, that had the ſenſe to foreſee the Iſſue of that Inſurrection,

rection, addreſſes himſelf to *David*, with a falſe Accuſation againſt his Landlord *Mephiboſheth*, as if he had been a Well-willer to the Conſpiracy. *David* then being in an Haſty *Paſſion*, and being byaſſed by a Kindneſs received at ſuch a Seaſon, and not imagining that *Ziba* would impoſe upon him with a Lye, that might eaſily have been detected, *raſhly* ordered this Calumniator to be made *Owner* of the Land, whereof he had been but a *Tenant* heretofore. But at the Return of *David*, Honeſt *Mephiboſheth* having opportunity to vindicate himſelf, *David* gives the Sentence now recited; and it is commonly ſuppoſed, That herein *David* ſtill renews and confirms at leaſt, part of the Sentence, which he had before ſo *raſhly* uttered. Not only have the moſt of Chriſtian Expoſitors cry'd out upon *David*, for his extream and cruel Harſhneſs, in giving away unto a falſe Loon, half the Land of Innocent *Mephiboſheth*; but alſo the Jewiſh Expoſitors make hard Reflections upon *David* for his Action here; and they make this Remark upon it, *I have ſaid, Thou and Ziba divide the Land*; *At the ſame Inſtant the Providence of God ſaid, Then let* Rehoboam *and* Jeroboam *divide the Kingdom.* Whereas, in my Opinion, we have hitherto done more Injury and Injuſtice to *David*, than ever he did unto *Mephiboſheth*. *David*, if I do not miſtake, does here only and fully Revoke a piece of *Raſhneſs*, which he had before fallen into. And I thus advance towards the Proof of my Expoſition.

Firſt,

First, 'Tis uncharitable to ſuppoſe, *David* would wrong *Mephibeſheth*. To take away the Livings of ſo blameleſs and righteous a Perſon, becauſe a baſe Fellow had *belyed* him, would have been a moſt abominable thing. The *Wiſdom* of a *David* would not have permitted him to be baffled and befool'd by ſuch a palpable Cheat as would now have been put upon him; eſpecially when a Thouſand Men of *Benjamin*, were now at his Elbow to give him a true Information: He had a little before been called, *One like an Angel of God, to diſcern Good and Bad*; whereas now, it muſt have been ſaid, *There are few Mortals but what would have had more Diſcretion in them*. Nor would the *Juſtice* of a *David* allow'd a Judgment ſo unreaſonable as well as arbitrary; it was after ſaid, *He did that which was right in the ſight of the Lord, and turned not aſide, all the dayes of his life, but only in the matter of Uriah*; whereas we muſt now have look'd for one Exception more, *And in the matter of abuſed Mephibeſheth*. Beſides all this, The *kindneſs* of *David* for the Father of *Mephibeſheth*, his old and his dear Friend *Jonathan*, was inconſiſtent with ſuch a piece of barbarous Cruelty; a *love* beyond that of a *Woman*, to the Father, would not ſo eaſily ſowre into a *wrath* beyond that of an *Enemy* to the Son; and this the rather, becauſe the very *Beard* and *Garb* of the diſconſolate *Mephibeſheth*, was enough to proclaim his Innocency. I add,

Secondly, As he *would* not, ſo he *did* not commit ſo great a Wrong. And methinks, the Holy Spirit of God, ſeems to invite us unto ſuch an Apprehenſion; by the diſlocation of the Story. For, I pray, mark it; In the Twenty third Verſe, you have *David* at *Jordan*; and again, at the Thirty firſt Verſe you have *David* at *Jordan*; and yet in the Story of *Mephiboſheth*, which lies between thoſe Two Verſes, you have *David* at *Jeruſalem*. Now, whence this diſlocation! how comes the Story of *Mephiboſheth* to be thus anticipated? There was doubtleſs a reaſon for it; and it might be this In the preceding Paragraph, you have *Shimei* and *Ziba* (a very proper Couple!) both meeting of *David* at *Jordan*. There you find that *Shimei*, a bauling, railing, bloody Traitor, upon his confeſſion obtains the pardon of his Crimes. Well, immediately upon this, the Diſcourſe between *David* and *Mephiboſheth*, though it happened ſome time after, is introduced here. Which may ſufficiently ſuggeſt unto us, If *David* could be ſo eaſily reconciled unto a curſed *Shimei*, certainly, he could not be inexorable to an harmleſs *Mephiboſheth*; he that would not hear *Abiſhai* preſſing for a revenge upon a *Shimei*, would hear a juſt *Mephiboſheth* making a juſt Apology for himſelf.

But after all, The Hinge of all will turn upon the true and right Notion of the Bargain heretofore made, about the Lands of *Mephiboſheth*. You ſhall read, I'll ſhow you, the Original Covenant about thoſe famous Lands; 'tis in

in 2 *Sam* 9. 10, —— *The King called to Ziba, Sauls ſervant, and ſaid unto him. I have given to thy Maſters ſon all that pertained to* Saul, *and all his Houſe. Thou therefore ſhalt till the Land for him, and thou ſhalt bring in the Fruits, that thy Maſters ſon may have food to eat. But* Mephibo-ſheth *thy Maſters ſon, ſhall eat Bread alwayes at my Table. And* Mephiboſheth *had a young ſon, whoſe name was* Mica. Upon the whole, I thus underſtand the Contract. *Ziba* was not *Proprietor* of theſe Lands; but was a *Tenant*, or, more properly, a *Bayliff*, or a *Steward* of them. *Ziba* was to Till the Lands; but how were the Profits to be diſpoſed of? Why thus; One half of the Ioncomes was for the maintenance of *Mephiboſheth* at the Court; it was to bear his Court-Expences. For, when *David* invited *Mephiboſheth* to Court, it was not that he might there live upon Alms; but it was out of reſpect and friendſhip to him, as the like was done to *Barzillai* afterwards; and perhaps, there was a *Reaſon of State* in it, which there is no need of mentioning. He was to live in Port, as a Perſon of Quality, with his Retinue there; and half the Revenue of his Lands was to maintain it. But which way went the other half? The Product of the other half was divided between *Mica* and *Ziba* himſelf; in ſhort, *Ziba* has a Moiety for the maintenance of *Mica*, and hires a Moiety for the maintenance of *Mephiboſheth*; and upon that Score, 'tis ſaid, *All that dwelt in* Ziba's *Houſe, were ſervants to* Mephibotheth. Well then, when *David* now ſays, *I have ſaid, Thou and* Ziba *divide the Land*; he does but

unſay what he had raſhly ſaid when *Ziba*'s Lye ſurprized him; and orders things to be according to the firſt ſettlement and contrivance of them; 'tis *q. d. I now recal the raſh words I ſpoke about your Lands*, Mephiboſheth; *you need be at no further care; you know what I ſaid in our firſt Act of Settlement; I would have that ſtand for the preſent; you ſhall enjoy all that I had raſhly taken from you.* If any now object, that our *David* went not far enough, in making Reparations to *Mephiboſheth*; why did not he take *Ziba*, and hang him! 'Tis Anſwer enough, That it was now no *time* for *that*; and what was done afterwards, *who can tell?*

You ſee how far my concernment for the Honour of *David* has tranſported me; and it will be more *David*'s wrong than mine, if you don't embrace my Interpretation. But it is now time for me to tell you, what it is that I am driving at; it is, this all-concerning

DOCTRINE.

That Haſty Paſſions do ſometimes put, even Good Men upon thoſe Raſh Things, which they ſhould always be ready to Retract.

There are more than three times three Sins, which Men violate the *Third* Commandment of our God withal. But among them, that of *Raſhneſs* deſerves to be marked with a very particular *Brand*. *Inconſiderateneſs* is a direct contradiction of the Frame which that Commandment

ment would have us always to uphold. The Commandment requires us always to maintain such a *Reverence* of God, as to act with a careful regard unto that *Rule*, and that *End*, which God has given us. When Men cast off the sense of God, and of his Word, and of his Praise, and suffer themselves to be hurried by their *hasty Passions* into *rash things*, they *take the Name of the Lord in vain*.

PROP. I.

There are *hasty Passions* oftentimes raging in Men, yea, in the best of Men. 'Tis a Division of *man*, made by one that had much of a *man* in him; You are to look upon *man* as consisting of two parts, namely, *The Man*, and, *The Beast*. Besides those Noble Capacities, of *knowing*, and *thinking*, and *choosing*, which make us *men*; we have those *Appetites*, because of which that Saint once complained, in *Psal.* 73. 22. *I have been as a beast before God*. Our *Passions* were in their first Creation, most *useful* things, and were no more damage to us, than *Wheels* are to a Coach, or than *Wings* are to a Bird. And the new Creation of them, does by degrees reduce them to that excellent *order*; so that they are to move neither out of their *place*, nor out of their *pace*. But alas! *Original Sin*, is a sort of *Leprosie*, which the whole Soul is distempered with; 'tis a woful *Disorder* with which it has depraved all our Faculties. In which *Disorder* the share that our *Passions* have, is remarkable and very lamentable. *Adam* that once had an Empire over

the *Beasts* of the Field, upon his Fall, comes into a slavery unto as bad *Beasts* in his own miserable Soul. Hence 'tis that our *Passions* are now become *hasty*, furious, boisterous, and very much ungovernable. They are θηρια της ψυχης, the *Beasts* of our Souls, and very *wild* ones indeed they are! Our *Passions* are the Motions of our Souls towards the Objects of them. Now these are become, what we may call, as in *Rom.* 1. 26. *Vile Affections*. *Temerity* is now become a Property of our *Passions*: They move not with such *leisure*, and in such *measure*, as were convenient. They are under no Command; but are worthy of the Name, which the Philosopher put upon them, *Unnatur'd Dogs*. These *Dogs* do often worry the Children of God themselves; a Great *Luther* who removed the foulest Abominations out of the Church, yet could not hinder these *Dogs* from infecting of his own Heart.

PROP. II.

There are many *Rash Things*, which our *Hasty Passions* do precipitate us unto the doing of. Where the *Passions* Reign, those Tyrants make mad work of it; we then become *Servi Servorum*, the Curse of *Cham* is come upon us, and we must have many a silly Thing required and exacted of us. We read in *Luke* 10. 30. *A certain man fell among thieves, who stripped him, and wounded him, and left him half dead.* There hath been given a mystical Exposition of that Parable; now they that give a mystical sense of

it,

t, make our *Paſſions* to be the *Thieves* which do ſo much miſchief to our Souls.

Raſh Things are Things that we have no good *reaſon* for; and the chief miſchief that our *Paſſions* do unto us, is this; They puſh us on to the moſt *unreaſonable things*. We are adviſed in *Pſal.* 32. 9. *Be ye not as the horſe, or the mule, which have no underſtanding*. But when our *Paſſion* is in the *Saddle*, it throws the *Bridle* of *Reaſon* off, and away we are driven with ſwitch and ſpur in our Sides, till 'tis well if we do not break our Necks over ſome deadly *Precipice*.

The *Paſſions* ought always to be under the Direction of the *Underſtanding*; a Man ſhould have his *Paſſions* as the Poets Fable their *Æolus* to have the *Winds*; he ſhould have them to at command, that they ſhould blow juſt when, and how hard, and how long, his Rational Soul ſhall give permiſſion for them: But when theſe *Uſurpers* get into the Throne, what abſurd, and ſordid, and prepoſterous Effects are then to be expected? When *Hagar* is the only Miſtreſs in the Houſe, and *Sarah* turned out of doors, there is like to be fine Work, I aſſure you. If *Reaſon* might be heard, all would go well; but *Paſſion* makes uſually an horrible Storm, which drowns all Rational Propoſals. We are told, in *Eccl.* 9. 10. *The words of wiſe men are heard in quiet*; but *wiſe things* can't be heard for the din and noiſe of outragious *Paſſions*, and ſo, none but *raſh things* will be done under their diſcompoſed Government. We ſay truly, *Perit judicium cum res tranſit in affectum.* When *Paſſion* is up, *Judg-*

ment is degraded, perverted, nullified. Said the Wise man, in *Eccl.* 10. 16. *Wo to thee, O Land, when thy King is a Child.* Much more may we say, *Wo to thee, O man, when thy King is thy Lust*; *when childish, yea, brutish Passion Ruleth over thee.* Our Lord has warned us, *That when the blind lead the blind, they both fall into a ditch. Passion* is a blind sort of a thing, and it makes blind all that fall under the conduct and phrenzy of it; now some *rash thing* or other is the *ditch*, which it quickly causes us to fall into. There are at least a dozen *Passions* which we are born into the World withal; and what a world of *rash things*, do you think, are like to be done by a Man that shall be *Hag ridden* with so many *Enchantments* at once upon him?

PROP. III.

Men should be ready to *retract* the *rash things* which their *hasty Passions* have caused in them. The most *witty*, if not the most learned and holy Writer of all the Ancients, thought it no dishonour unto him, to write a Book of *Retractations*. *Retractations* are things that no wise and good Men will be averse unto, when they have done any *rash things* that have made them necessary. Now there are three things implied in the *Retractations* that we are to make of the *rash things* produced by our *hasty Passions*.

First, It is our Duty to *examine* what *rash things* our *hasty Passions* have been the occasion of. Our *Passions* would not let us beforehand weigh what

what *rash things* we do; but after we have done them, we should then view them, and scan them over again, for our humiliation before the Lord. We are told, in *Jer.* 8. 6. Men should say, *What have I done?* When we have done a *rash thing*, we should cast it into the Scales, not only of *Reason*, but of *Scripture* too, and with sorrow say, *O what have I done!* When *David* had once done a *rash thing*, 'tis added, *His heart smote him.* There are certain *smitings of Heart*, with which we are to reflect upon the *rash* Actions of our Lives.

Secondly, It is our Duty to bear the *Reproofs* which are given us for the *rash things* which have been the efforts of our *hasty Passions*. A *rash* Fault will become as bad as one more *deliberate* and *voluntary*, if we cannot patiently bear to be reproved for it. If one come, and justly give that Admonition to us, *You have done a rash thing, pray, think of it*; we should thankfully reply, out of *Psal.* 141. 5. *Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oyl.* So should we say, *Pray smite me, reprove me, if I have done any rash thing; you'l deal better by me, than if you invited me to a Feast where the most excellent Oyl should be poured on me.* When a Great Man once met with a Check for a *rash thing*, said he, *Blessed be the Lord, which hath sent thee this Day to meet me, and blessed be thy Advice, and blessed be thou!* In like manner, we should *bless* God for any Stops that a Reproof may lay upon the *rash things* that we are too prone unto.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Our Duty is to mend the *Errors* that are found in the *raſh things* which have proceeded from our *haſty Paſſions*. There are many *raſh* miſtakes, which we heedleſly run into; now, we ſhould readily *correct* thoſe miſtakes; as far as we can, we ſhould *unſay* and *undo* thoſe miſtakes. It was a moſt *raſh thing* that was done by *Ahaſhuerus*, when he iſſued out a Proclamation for the Deſolation of the only People that God had in the World; but he did well in hearkening to that Requeſt, in *Eſt.* 8. 5. *Let it be written to reverſe the Letters.* We ſhould as far, and ſoon, and much as we can, *reverſe* every *raſh thing*; and what wrong ſteps we have taken, we ſhould *go back*, if it be not too late. What ſaid *Aſaph*, when a *raſh thing* had been uttered by him; *I have been fooliſh and ignorant!* We ſhould preſently redreſs the *Folly* and *Ignorance* in the *raſh things* that we fall into.

APPPLICATION.

I. What if we ſhould now *retract* ſome *Expoſitions* of ſome *Remarkables* in the Bible, which have been perhaps too *raſhly* and *haſtily* taken up! It will hold ſome correſpondence with our late Vindication of *David*, as well as prove a fit Inference from the *Doctrine* which we are inſiſting on, if we entertain our ſelves with ſuch a Contemplation as we go along. There has a deal of *wrong* been very commonly done, as well to the Sacred Bible it ſelf, as to ſeveral renowned Perſons in the Bible, by the *raſh* and *haſty*

hasty Commentaries that have been made thereupon. 'Twill scarce be a *Digression*, and if it were one, it would be a profitable, it should be an acceptable one, to touch upon a few notable Examples. 'Tis a most *rash* and *hasty* Observation that has been made upon the whole Old Testament, by Thousands of Learned Men; We have in our Hands a Greek Translation of of the Old Testament, which (they report) was made by Seventy Two Interpreters; there are in the New Testament several Quotations out of the Old, which we now find more agreeable to our *present Septuagint* than to the *Hebrew Original*. Hence many Exquisite and Accurate Critics imagine the *Hebrew Original* to be corrupted, and go to reform it by the *present Septuagint*. This now is a great wrong most *rashly* and *hastily* done to the Oracles of God. It was for more glorious Ends, than that of agreeing with a *falacious and erroneous Translation*, that the Holy Spirit of God cited Things from the Old Testament in other Words than they were first written in. It may be proved, that some of the Primitive Christians, *hundreds* of Years after the writing of the New Testament, did alter the *Septuagint*, in many of those places which the New Testament quotes out of the Old, and put in the Words of the New Testament which were not there before it. It is easie to assign the *cause* of their doing so; and for the *Proof* of it, I need only bring *Psal.* 40. 6. There in the *Hebrew* it is, *My Ears hast thou bored*: In the *Septuagint* it now is, *A Body hast thou prepared for me.* Well, so 'tis in the New Testament,

ment, even in *Heb.* 10. 5. Some Divines will now make no bones to tell you, *The Apoſtle took his Words out of the Seventy, and the Seventy did not read the Original as we do in our Days.* But this is a vile wrong, moſt *raſhly* and *haſtily* done to theſe Holy Pages; no, 'Twas the *Spirit* of God that made that Paraphraſe by the Apoſtle on the *Pſalmiſt*; and you ſhall find in *Jerom*'s Works, and even in *Jerom*'s Days, that the Seventy did not ſo read the Words as now they do; the New Teſtament by no means did *Conform* to the Seventy; but ſomebody did more lately *Reform* the Seventy by the New Teſtament.

Having thus taken off an Aſperſion that has been *raſhly* and *haſtily* catt upon the whole Bible, why mayn't we ſee whether no particular Perſons in the Bible have been *wronged* with *raſh* and *haſty* Gloſſes upon them. I know not whether we do not ſome wrong to *Laban*, about the *time* that he beſtowed his Two Daughters upon his Kinſman; though, I confeſs, in the *thing* he were hard enough; if the matter be exactly pondered, I ſuppoſe, we ſhall find, that *Jacob* firſt married, and then ſerved; and that his Nuptials were celebrated before he had been Two Months at his Uncles Houſe; which is, you know, contrary to the vulgar Opinion of it. We have commonly condemned *Zipporah*, as if in *Exod.* 4. 25. ſhe had with a ſufficient Prophaneſs and Impudence called *Moſes*, *A bloody Husband*; whereas indeed, we have been too *raſh* and *haſty* in it: She only call'd her Child, *One eſpouſed*

espoused by Blood (that is, by Circumcision) *to the Holy God*; An Expression most proper to the occasion! I know not what Thoughts many have had concerning *Joseph*, when they find him speak, in *Gen.* 44. 5. of *Divining by a Cup*; whereas, if we be not *rash* and *hasty*, we shall find no mean Translators thus to read the words, *Is it not that in which my Lord drinketh, and for which he would make a through search.* I hope, 'tis also a *rash* and *hasty* thing, to charge the Hebrew Midwives with Telling a *Lye* to *Pharoah*; no, I rather think, They truly acknowledged a miraculous Work of God, for their distressed Nation. I would also try whether nothing might be said for the clearing of *Jephta* from the murder of his Daughter, but it will be too long for the present Exercise. We have commonly condemned *Naaman*, as if in 2 *King.* 5. 18. he had asked a liberty still to bear a part in the idolatrous Worship of *Rimmon*; whereas, 'tis possible, we have been too *rash* and *hasty* in thinking so; an Excellent Writer long since, has made it evident, that the Words refer not unto his *future*, but his *former* Actions, and he laments it, that he had heretofore so often bow'd before that accursed Idol; upon which *Confession*, the Prophet gives him *Absolution*. I have heard a Jew reproach the Martyr *Stephen*, for saying in *Act.* 7. 16. *A Sepulchre Abraham bought for a sum of money of the Sons of Emmor*: Whereas, the *Sepulchre* bought by *Abraham*, was of *Ephron* the *Hittite* at *Hebron*. But if we be not *rash* and *hasty*, the Text may be so Translated as to admit this Paraphrase. *Jacob and our Fathers died, and were removed*

removed to Sychem, and were laid in Sepulchres, both in that which Abraham bought for money, and also in that which was bought of the Sons of Emmor, the Father of Sychem. I'll give but one glance more. How often has *Paul* been charg'd with a *rash* and *hasty* Speech, for saying to the High-Priest, *God shall smite thee!* And this may seem argued from his adding in *Act.* 23. 5. *I wist not, that he was the High priest.* Whereas, it may be, 'twas a *rash* and *hasty* Charge which is now laid upon him. That very *Ananias*, that High-priest, if History deceive me not, came to a most miserable End, in the Destruction of *Jerusalem* afterwards; and so *Paul* did only denounce a sober, solemn, Divine Prophecy upon that wicked *Hypocrite*. Besides, 'tis likely that *Paul* not only knew the Dignity of this Dignified Clergyman, from the *Seat* and *Garb* which he saw him in, but also he had been brought up at the same *Colledge* with him. His meaning therefore must now be this. *I do not acknowledge this man for any High-priest at all; I declare his Priesthood wholly antiquated and abolished by the Lord Jesus, for whom I am a witness here; or, if there be an High-priest at all, I know this man too well to count him worthy of the Title.*

You see for how many Good People I have now made my self an *Advocate*. There are many Learned Persons in this Assembly, to whom (since I am their Debtor!) these can be no ungrateful Intimations; and I would give you many more of them, if other Matters were not by other People now call'd for. Wherefore,

II. Why

II. Why ſhould not all ungodly Sinners *retract* the lewd things which they have been *raſhly* and *haſtily* doing all their Days! We count it a *raſh* thing in *David*, for him to give away another Mans Lands unto a lying *Ziba*; but what a *raſh* thing then is it, for Men to give away their own Souls unto a lying *Devil*, at his firſt asking for them! And yet we may ſay to every unconverted Sinner among us. *Thou art the man!* This *raſh* and *haſty* Thing haſt thou a thouſand times over been guilty of. Every time that a Sinner does a thing which his Conſcience does rebuke him for, he bids the *Devil* take that poor, forlorn, undone *Soul* of his; and why is it? It is becauſe he believes the *Lyes* which the Devil tells him, about *The Pleaſures of Sin for a Seaſon here.* The unconverted Sinner is not only call'd a *Fool*, in this *Book of Wiſdom*, above an Hundred and Thirty Times over, if I have not miſcounted them; but it is alſo ſaid of him, in *Eccl.* 9. 3. *Madneſs is in his Heart.* Alas! the poor Sinner is *mad*, and they are none but *raſh* and impertinent, and extravagant Things, which he is continually doing of. Sinner, What *raſh Bargains* haſt thou been driving? Was it not a *raſh* Thing in our Firſt Father, to ſell his Innocence and his Paradiſe for an *Apple*? 'Tis a *raſh* Thing, which thou repeateſt every Day. Is it not a *raſh* Thing for thee, to ſquander away thy precious *Time* in *fooliſh* and *hurtful* Things, when all the Angels in Heaven can't fetch back one Minute of it? Is it not a *raſh* Thing for thee to ſpend all thy Life only in building and filling

a little

a little *Neſt*, which the Cudgels of Death will quickly break to peices, and then to have an Immortal *Soul* wholly unprovided for? And what *raſh Ventures* art thou making too! Was it not a *raſh* Thing in the Celebrated Philoſopher, to walk ſo far into a burning Mountain, till it ſwallowed him up? 'Tis a *raſh* Thing which thou art every Day expoſed with. Is it not a *raſh* Thing to ruſh upon that God, who is a *conſuming Fire* unto them that rebel againſt him? Is it not a *raſh* Thing to ſlight all the *Threatnings* of God, and all the *Judgments* of God, and provoke the Jealouſie of the Omnipotent God, by thy impenitent Unbelief? Is it not a *raſh* Thing to remain where the horrible Cannon-bullets of the Divine Vengeance are flying, roaring, ſtriking round about thee? *Who ever hardened himſelf againſt God, and proſpered?* O repent of this prodigious *Raſhneſs*! When Sinners come to *repentance*, that *repentance* is thus deſcribed, in *Iſa* 32. 4. *The Heart of the Raſh ſhall underſtand*. What is *Repentance*, but an *after mind*, and a *better mind*, than what the Sinner was once carried away withal? Pray change your *Minds*, Sinners; and you that have been ſo *raſh*, now by *repentance* grow *wiſe* again. When a Sinner is converted, it is ſaid of him, in *Luke* 15. 17. *He comes to himſelf*. Sinners, you have all this while been acting *beſides your ſelves*; you have been doing of none but *raſh things*, which you have not ſo much as a colour of *Reaſon* for. May you now come to ſee your own *Raſhneſs*, and with *Conſideration* change the dangerous Ways you are in. The God of Heaven

is

is this Day giving unto you that Call in *Hag.* 1. 5. *Thus saith the Lord, consider your ways.* The God of Heaven is this Day, making over you that sigh, in *Deut.* 32. 29. *O that they were wise, that they would consider their latter end!* Pray, do you answer that Call, answer that Sigh, by labouring that you may be able to say, as in *Psal.* 119. 59. *I thought on my ways, and I turned my feet!*

III. But then at last, let us all take heed of those *rash things* which by our *hasty Passions* we may all be betray'd into. We all of us have our *hasty Passions*; even the best *Elias* among us all, may be very sensibly subject thereunto; and we had need be careful that we be not thereby ensnared in such *rash things*, as will be for ever to be repented of. Methinks the Town-Clerk of *Ephesus* gave a most wholsome word at a Towns-meeting once, in *Acts* 19. 36. *Ye ought to do nothing rashly.* In the pursuance of such an Exhortation, let me set before you a few Cautions. And they may be such as these

First, Beware of *rash Jealousies*. By *rash Jealousies*, I mean, especially, all ungrounded suspicions of God, and of his Free-Grace, and of his Good Will unto us. It is a frequent thing for persons to be *jealous* that their Names are not written in the *Book of Life*; and so think they, *'tis in vain for me to do any thing at working out my own Salvation.* And it is as frequent for Persons to be *jealous*, that they have sinned beyond the *reach of Mercy*, and that so there

there is no *hope of Mercy* for them. But it is a *rash thing* for any to imagine so; and the God of Heaven takes these *rash thoughts* very unkindly from us. He says in *Isa.* 55. 8. *My thoughts are not your thoughts.* I do *boldly*, and yet not *rashly*, affirm it, that for ought any of you know, you may (even the blackest and oldest Sinner among you all) be *predestinated* for a glorious place among the Angels of God for ever. If any of you are under Fears that you have committed the *unpardonable Sin*, I may tell you that you are yet *free from the great Transgression*. I do *further*, and not *rashly*, affirm it, that there is not the wickedest Creature in all this Congregation, which would not be unspeakably welcome unto the Lord Jesus Christ upon their Humble Addresses: Go, in Gods Name, go after all your multiplyed Iniquities, carry a distressed and a perishing Soul to the Lord Jesus Christ, *He will not cast you out!* Some of you are haunted with such Thoughts as have a monstrous *Blasphemy* and *Atheism* in them; it will be a *rash thing* for you now to think, *That God has cast you off.* No, I can assure you, that such Injections do rarely trouble the Minds of any but such as are already the true Children of God. They are *Darts* which the Devil would poyson and inflame your Hearts withal: But unless he perceive a person to be one that will be *troubled* for the Sins of Thoughts, he will not give these molestations to them. Now, *that* is the Character of them that are *born again.*

In

In a word, you that have heretofore experienced a *regenerating work* of God upon your Souls; pray, do you beware of *rash Jealousies* about your selves. It was a *rash* word of her, *My God has forgotten me, and forsaken me.* It was a *rash* word of him, *I shall one day perish by the hands of my enemy.* The Saints have spoken such *rash* words, but they have been forced afterwards to say, as in *Psal.* 77. 10. *This is my infirmity*; 'twas *rashly* spoken of me. For you to make *nothing* of *all* that God has done in bringing of you home unto himself, you are not well aware how displeasing this may be to the Holy Spirit of God.

Secondly, Beware of *rash Promises*. A *rash Promise* made unto *Man* layes an unhappy snare for the Maker of it. It is the badge of a good Man in *Psal.* 15. 4. *He swears to his own hurt, and changeth not.* We *rashly* promise many a thing; and, if it be a lawful thing, it may be for our *hurt* if we keep it, but it will be much more for our *hurt* if we break it; if it be a wicked thing we must break it, and not keep it; but then we must own with shame the *hurt* we did in making it. The *rash Promise* which *Israel* made unto the *Gibeonites*, was an occasion of much Temptation afterwards unto them. You will do well never to make a *Promise* unto a Neighbour without a *reserve*; and never to *promise* but when you are both willing and able to *perform*. A *rash Promise* to do a thing may be very pernicious to us, and so may a *rash Promise* not to do a thing. A Church-Member once being admonished, that he would repent

of a miſcarriage which he would not own, *raſhly* replyed, *No, I'll burn before I'll turn.* And the Houſe of this Man was quickly after burned, himſelf periſhing in the Flames. This, as to *Man.* But a *raſh Promiſe* made unto *God*, yet further entangles, as well as defiles and pollutes the Soul that makes it. What ſays the Wiſe Man in *Eccl.* 5. 2, 5. *Be not raſh with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be haſty to utter any thing before God: Better it is that thou ſhouldeſt not vow, than vow and not pay.* It is a *raſh thing* for a Man to *vow* a thing beyond his own *reach*; ſuch a *raſhneſs* there often is in the Popiſh *Vows* of *Continency.* It is much more a *raſh thing* for a Man to *vow* a thing againſt Gods *Law.* There was an execrable *raſhneſs* in the Vow of thoſe Miſcreants, who *vow'd* the Death of the Apoſtle *Paul*; and ſo there was in the Vow of *Herod*, who ſwore (I ſuppoſe by his own *Head*) what he thought bound him to cut off the *Head* of *John*, though one of the Antients has found a way, you know, to have brought him off. In ſhort, it is a *raſh thing* to vow any thing that ſhall not be *commanded* by God, or *acceptable* and *ſerviceable* to him. We ſhould therefore look narrowly into all the circumſtances of our *Vows*, before we venture upon them. I ſuppoſe 'tis the want of this that has given cauſe for that Obſervation, That a Nation or People hardly ever made a *Vow*, or Covenant, or Engagement againſt any one thing, but they afterwards *did* that very thing. You may, if you pleaſe, apply the Obſervation!

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Beware of *rash Prejudices*. How often do profane Men take up a *Prejudice* against the Truths and Ways, and People of God? They know that all the *Religion* they have themselves, is but *Hypocrisie*; and so they clamour that there is nothing but *Hypocrisie* in the *Religion* of other Men. Perhaps they have seen one *Church-Member* prove a *Beast*, or a *Knave*; and then they cry out, *They are all so!* This now is a piece of most Brutal *Rashness*. To cure so Rash a Prejudice, I shall only say what was heretofore said in that very case in *John* 1. 46. *Come and see*. We should be in like manner wary how we take up a *rash Prejudice* against this or that particular Person in the World; we should not be ready to *censure* a Man, as a stranger to the fear of God, because we can't readily comprehend something that the Man says, or does, or meets withal. Our Saviour forbids this *rash judging* in *Matth.* 7. 1. *Judge not*. It was a *rash* thing in the Disciples, when they saw a Blind Man, to say, *Who is the Sinner now?* And *Job*'s Friends had like to have paid for a *rash* thing, when they imputed hard things to him, because God inflicted *hard things* on him. This *wariness* is peculiarly to guard us from a *rash Prejudice* against any Man who may otherwise be an Instrument of much good unto us; a *Magistrate*, a *Minister*, or the like. It was the Complaint of the Prophet in *Jer.* 20. 10. *I heard the defaming of many. Report, say they, and we will report it.* There is no Servant of the Publick, but he is traduced with *false Reports* carried up and down the Country; and

thefe *Reports* beget *rafh Prejudices* in the Spirits of the People againft the beft Friends they have in the World; it is impoffible to expreis the fatal Mifchief and Phrenfie of thefe *Prejudices*; but we fhould not be fo *rafh* as to be thus eafily impofed upon.

Fourthly, Beware of *Rafh Conjectures*. 'Tis an ufual thing that Men go to fhape fome *Conjecture* upon the caufe of this or that Calamity that comes upon a place; but there is oftentimes a World of *Raflmefs* in their *Conjectures*, Unlefs we fee the *Sins* committed, which the Word of God *plainly* and *clearly* threatens thofe *Judgments* of Heaven for, we fhould not be very pofitive in faying, *The Judgments are come for fuch or fuch a caufe*. What a *rafh* thing was it in them of old, who counted *that* the original of all the Calamities which came upon them, in *Jer.* 44. 18. *Since we left off to burn incenfe unto the Queen of Heaven, we have wanted all things*. An Affembly of *Lutherans* once fell into fuch an aftonifhing and infatuated *Raflmefs*, when they afcribed the horrid Calamities which waited *Germany*, unto this, *That the Worfhip of Images was growing fo much out of fafhion*. It is not *fafe*, but *rafh* to fay, that the Judgments which are the *confequents* of thefe and thofe Tranfactions, do come as the *Punifhments* of thofe Tranfactions, unlefs the Word of God evidently declare the *Tranfactions* to be *Tranfgreffions* before the Lord. Becaufe that fince fuch a *Year* we have had many a Blaft upon us, and fince fuch a *Day* we have had fore Inconveniencies, *that* is not enough to make us conclude,

chuse, that what was done such a *Year*, or such a *Day*, is the cause of all the Controversie. Thus also, we may make some *conjecture* upon the *fulfilments* of the *Prophesies* in the Book of God; we may with an humble and modest enquiry guess whereabouts we are upon the *Line of Time*. Our Saviour was provoked at them of old, because they flouted at such endeavours, in *Matth.* 16. 3. *Ye hypocrites, can ye not discern the signs of the times?* i. e. that the seventy weeks in which the *Messiah* was to come, are almost expired? But we should not be *rash* in such Conjectures; we should have better *bottoms* and *epochs* to build upon, than they that allotted so much upon *Sixty Six* a while ago; we may otherwise plunge our selves into great unhappinesses.

Fifthly, Beware of *Rash Enterprizes*. It was a *rash* Expedition that the *Ephraimites* made out of *Egypt* into *Canaan*, before the full time of their Deliverance was come. We do *rash* things when we do not go to God for his Direction in them: Thus we read in *Isa.* 30. 1. *Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, which take counsel, but not of me.* When we have any weighty thing to do, we should have God for our *Counsellour*, by searching what his *Word* enjoyns upon us, and by begging that our *Heart* and *Way* may be disposed by his invisible Influences. While *Israel* was under its *Theocracy*, even till the days of *Solomon*, God sent his Angels audibly to instruct from the *Urim* and *Thummim*, what course to steer when they consulted him. When we don't remember duely to *consult God*,

before our great undertakings, he does with woful, bitter, deadly disappointments, make us to find, *That we have gone rashly to work.* I pray, let us ask our selves, whether we have our selves never found it so? And thus for particular Persons to dispose of themselves in *Marriage*, or to do any thing that their comfort and welfare depends much upon; without much *Prayer* with *Fasting* over it, is to be inexcusably *rash*. And as it is *rashness* to enterprize any considerable thing, without consulting our *God*, so 'tis for us to do it without consulting our *Strength*. Says our Lord in *Luke* 14. 28. *Which of you intending to build, sits not down first, and counts the cost?* Why, 'tis none but a *rash Man*. [*Canis teſtinans*] that won't compare his *undertaking* with his *ability*, before he'll enter thereupon.

Sixthly, Beware of *Rash Diſſatisfactions*. 'Tis no rare thing for Men to grow *diſſatisfied* at some of the circumstances that God has placed them in; but it is an easie thing to be *rash* in those *diſſatisfactions*. What a *rash* thing was it in the renowned *Elias*, in 1 *King.* 19. 4. *He sat down under a Juniper-tree, and requested for himself, that he might dye, and said, Now, O Lord, take away my life.* But, good Sir, what if God had granted this *rash* Request of yours, had not you been a loser by it? Why, 'tis an old saying, *That many an eminent Man sits under* Elias's *Juniper tree*. Men that are in publick places, had need look to their own Spirits, left by some *diſtaſte* and *leven* in them, they provoke the God of Heaven to deprive them of all their precious opportunities to serve their Generation.

tion. When *Moſes* had a moſt unworthy and unthankful People under him, it is ſaid in *Pſal.* 106. 32. *It went ill with Moſes for their ſakes; becauſe they provoked his ſpirit, ſo that he ſpoke unadviſedly with his lips.* A Perſon that moves in any large *ſphere* of ſerviceableneſs, will certainly find a perverſe and froward World, requite him very baſely for it; but let him not now be carried away with ſuch a diſcontent, as to reſolve, *I will not be an healer to ſuch a People; I'll do no more for them; they ſhall ſink or ſwim for all me.* Sir, this may be ſuch an *unadviſedneſs* as the Holy God may chaſtiſe, by throwing of you by among thoſe that he will never uſe for the good of his People any more. And thus alſo, it becomes particular Perſons to keep under their *diſſatisfactions* at whatever eſtate God may ſee needful for them. Our Lord ſaid in *John* 13. 7. *What I do thou knoweſt not now, but thou ſhalt know hereafter.* You can't ſay, when things go too *faſt*, or too *ſlow*, an *Impriſonment* has ere now been the way to an *Advancement.* On the other ſide, when the *diſcontents* of Perſons drive them to *raſh Wiſhes* and *raſh Speeches*, 'tis well if the God that hears them all, ſay not *Amen* unto them. I have heard an angry *Father* ſay, *He car'd not whether he ever ſaw ſuch a Child again*; and God has taken care that accordingly he never did. So will a weary *Mother* ſay, *She hopes this is the laſt Child ſhe ſhall ever have*; and God has taken care that ſhe has had none perfect or living after it.

Laſtly, Beware of *Raſh Zeal.* We read of ſome in *Rom.* 10. 2. *They have a zeal of God, but not*

not according to knowledge. Such a *Zeal* there is in many that *rashly* burns like *Wild-fire*, and seeks to devour those very things that are *holy, and just, and good.* And there is a more pardonable *Zeal* in others, that will furiously exclaim against, perhaps a true *Child* of God, and this because of some *Innocent*, and it may be *Laudable* thing, which his Conscience has cause to be well satisfied withal. Moreover, 'tis but a *rash Zeal* for a Man to revile an *Opinion*, which for ought he does yet infallibly know, may be *a Glorious Truth of God.* It is not impossible that many things may be quickly understood and entertained as blessed Mysteries about the *Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ*, which yet from the time that the *Kingdom of Antichrist* has been in play, to this very day, the multitudes of good Men have with a *Rash Zeal*, bestowed shameful, railing, and odious Characters upon. Let us beware of all this *Rashness.* And in opposition thereunto, let me recommend these two things.

First, Let nothing be done too *suddenly.* Let us be Men of *Thoughts.* It was the practice of an Holy Man, which Preached many scores of Sermons in this very Pulpit long ago, That if any important *Question* were asked him, he would not give an *Answer* thereunto, before he had made a *pause* which had some secret and silent *Ejaculations* in it. O did we but keep our *pauses* well, there would be a general *Harmony* in our Lives! The *Jews* Report, that old *Adam* used to say, *A Man would never do amiss, if he saw from the beginning to the end.* And it was once

once the Mode of no rash Person, when he saw any Man in haste upon any thing, to say, *Pray stay a little, and we shall have done the sooner!*

Secondly, Let nothing be done too *Angrily*. Be assured, nothing is done so well in *Anger*, but what may be done better out of it. The *Roman* Emperour, if he were *Angry*, would say, or do nothing till he had repeated, over all the Letters of the *Alphabet*. When a Man is *Angry* he's meerly *Frantick*. If your *Anger* be up, even make a stop; say nothing, do nothing, till at least you have gone over the *Lords Prayer*, or some such way cooled the *Fever*. All will be *Rash* while the *Anger* holds. I need only add that Oracle in *Prov.* 13. 10. *With the well advised is wisdom.*

A P-

APPENDIX.

The Great Ambition of a Good Christian.

EPH. iii. 19.

—That ye might be filled with all the Fulneſs of God.

THE greateſt Bleſſedneſs that any *Rational Creature* can arrive unto, is expreſſed in theſe Words. Words very fit to drop from the Pen of a Man that had been already in the *Third Heaven* among the Angels of God.

The Chriſtianiſed *Epheſians* had once too much dived into the *Depths of Satan*, by their *unlawful Arts*. At their Converſion, ſuch was their *Self-denial*, that they burned the *Manuſcripts* from which

which they had their curled Skill, though according to *Luke*'s Computation, the value thereof was near Sixteen Hundred Pound Sterling. Behold them well requited here; they are favoured with an Inspired Epistle, wherein the *deep things of God* are set before them. The *chief things of the ancient mountains*, the *precious things of the everlasting Hills*, the great Mysteries of *Election* and *Redemption*, and *Free grace*, are handled in this Epistle, truly to as not in any other. *Paul* himself appeals to this Epistle, as not the least Evidence of his claim to *extraordinary Revelation*.

The Excellent Apostle was now *Prisoner* at *Rome*. That was no doubt a sore Exercise unto his Children, his People at *Ephesus*. To comfort them under it, like a watchful *Pastor*, yea, like a tender *Father*, he sends them word, *Though I cannot preach to you, yet I do pray for you.* Our Context here tells us for what he prayed. A *Father* for his Children, a *Pastor* for his People, cannot make a better *Prayer*.

The *Prayers* of such a Man as *Paul*, sure they are very *remarkable*, very *imitable* Prayers. There are, I think, *Seven* of those Supplications, beside what are in the *Salutations*, occurring in his *Writings*: Of them, This is one. It is a *Prayer* made up of *Petition* and *Thanksgiving*. In the *Petition* we have the *Object* and the *Matter* of the *Prayer*. The *Matter* of the *Prayer* has Four great Things contained in it: The *Fourth* and the *greatest* of which is that which falls under our Discourse at this Time. You may observe Three *Blessings* petitioned for; *Spiritual*

Blessings

Blessings in Heavenly Matters. In those Three *Blessings*, the Interests, the Efficacies of all the Three Persons in the Trinity, towards Believers, are distinctly wished for. The *Prayer* is for the *strengthening* Influence of God the *Spirit*; for the *in-dwelling* Presence of God the *Son*; for the *revealed Love* of God the *Father*. But the last Blessing of all, takes in the whole *Godhead* for the *Ingle* of it. This is the Highest Prayer that no less than an Apostle *full of God* could make for any Persons, — *That ye might be filled with all the Fulness of God.* The Doctrine before us is,

To be filled with all the Fulness of God is an Attainment much to be desired.

Two *Propositions* are to be insisted on, for the *Illustration* of this Truth.

PROP. I.

To be *filled with all the Fulness of God*, is a thing very far *attainable*. This Apostle joins this thing with such things as *all Saints* do *attain* in some measure, to some experience of. The only thing to be now enquired, is,

What is that Fulness of God, which we are to labour for? Or, When may a Man be said to be filled with all the Fulness of God?

This *filling*, truly it is a thing better *felt* than *spoke*: But what shall then be said about the *Fulness*

Fulneſs it ſelf, of which it is? It is one of the *unutterable things*, yea, it is one of the *unfathomable things*, which we are concerned in. We may ſay, as in 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. *Eye hath not ſeen it, nor Ear heard it.* But that we may attempt a little at it; —— The *Fulneſs* of God, is that *Communication* from God, wherewith he gives at once *Employment*, and *Satisfaction* unto the Souls of Men. A Man is then *filled* with the *Fulneſs* of God, when he is *viewing* of, and *acting* on, the *Fulneſs* in God. The Man thus *filled*, is both filled *by* God, and alſo filled *with* God. God is the *Author* by which, God is the *Object* from which, the Powers of the Soul are filled, when a Man is *filled with all the Fulneſs of God*. The Vacuities, the Diſorders cauſed in the Soul, by Sin, *Original*, or *Actual*, are by this *Filling* rectified. When the *Fulneſs* of God is *filling* of a Man, then the *Graces* of God are beſtowed on him, the *Glories* of God are affecting of him. Both of theſe go together; together therefore let us handle them.

O that our God may *keep theſe things in the Imagination of the Thoughts of our Hearts for ever.* Not accurate Scholarſhip, but *experimental Chriſtianity* alone will help us to conceive of theſe things. To particularize, —thus let us *think*, thus let us *do* and *live*.

1. A Man that is *filled with all the Fulneſs of God*, is *fixed* with a continual *Apprehenſion* about God. How does God *fill* a Man? It is by cauſing that Man to acknowledge him as the God who *fills* the World. It is the Demand of the

the great God, in *Jer.* 23. 24. *Do not I fill Heaven and Earth? saith the Lord.* Truly, The Lord *fills* the *Heart* of a Man, by enabling the Man to discern that *Fulness* of His which *fills Heaven and Earth.*

A Man that is *full of God*, beholds *God* in every *place.* The Man goes not into any corner, but he says within himself, *The Eye of the Omnipresent God is now upon me.* When the Man is trying to do a *good* thing, he thus encourages himself, *God sees me, and will reward me, if I do it!* When the Man is tempted to do a *bad* thing, he thus antidotes himself, *God sees me, and will destroy me, if I do it.* That Man subscribes to this Article in *David's* Confession of Faith, *Psal.* 139. 7. I can go *no whither from the presence of the Lord.*

Again, A Man that is *full of God*, beholds God in every *thing.* He sees the *Face* of God in every *Work* of God. This Man sticks not in *any Creatures*, stays not at *Second Causes*; with a spiritualized Soul, he soars up to *God* in all.

The *filled* Man sees *God* in all the Works of *Creation.* He looks upon the whole World, as the *Building*, the *Temple* of God; *Præsentemque docet quælibet herba Deum.* He sees God in every thing, from the *Sun* in the Firmament, to the *Stone* in the Pavement. He looks upon every thing in the World, with such a Sense of it, *The Finger of God is here; this is a thing subsisting not of it self, or for it self, but in God, and for God.* He disputes like *Paul* at *Athens*, in *Acts* 17. 24, 28. *God made the World, and all things therein; In Him we have our Being.*

The *filled* Man sees God in all the Works of *Providence* too. Nothing happens in the *World*, but he says of it, *This comes from that God whose Kingdom ruleth over all.* He ascribes nothing to *Casualty*, nothing to *Fatality*, and but little to Humane *Industry*. He accounts not of God as an Idle *Spectator* or *Supervisor* of Things here below: He is fully of that Belief, in *Mat.* 10. 29. *Not a Sparrow falls to the ground without God.* And nothing happens to himself, but he says of it, *This is by the ordering of that God who performeth all things for me.* He looks upon his *Enjoyments* as the *Smiles* of God. He doth not say, *By my Wisdom, by my Traffick, have I gotten Gold and Silver.* No; but he says, as in *Psal.* 11. 13. *This is the Lords doing.* He says of all his Mercies, as *Jacob* said of his *Children*, *These are the things that God hath graciously given me.* He looks upon his *Afflictions* as the *Rods* of God. He doth not say, *My Affliction comes out of the Dust, my Trouble springs out of the Ground.* No; but he says, as he in *Amos* 3. 6. *Shall there be Evil in the City, and the Lord hath not done it?* Yea, though the *Hand* of Man, though the *Rage* of Man be never so much in his Troubles, itjill he says, *It is God that bad* Shimei *curse*; *It is God that sent the* Chaldeans *to spoil.* In short, This Man hath not many waking Hours without some *Thoughts* on God.

2. A Man that is *filled with all the Fulness of God*, is *filled* with a gracious *Resemblance* of God. In the Blessed God, there is a *Fulness* of all Perfections. A good Man in his measure, hath something

something of that *Fulneſs* imprinted on himſelf; the *Glory* of God ſhines upon him, and he receives a little of his *Image*, he reflects a little of that *Brightneſs*. A Man *filled* with God, —that Man, according to the poor Capacity of a Man, comes to be *all that* which *God is*. *To be filled with God.* —We have a Paraphraſe upon it, in *Eph.* 5. 1. *Be followers of God as dear Children.* A Man *full of God*, is a Man *following of God*. This *Godly* Man is a *God-like* Man. He ſees that God is an *Holy* God; hereupon he reſolves with himſelf, *If God have no pleaſure in wickedneſs, If God be of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity, I will always be an Hater of Sin too.* He ſees that God is a *Righteous* God; hereupon again he reſolves with himſelf, *Since Gods Judgments always be Righteous, my Carriages never ſhall be Injurious.* He ſees that God is a *Merciful* God; hereupon this Man too endeavours evermore to be *giving* and *forgiving*, as like his *Heavenly Father*, as he can. We are adviſed in 1 *Pet.* 1. 16. to be *holy as God is holy.* We are adviſed in *Mat.* 5. 48. to be *perfect as God is perfect.* This it is to be *filled with God.* To be full of *Grace* is to be full of *God.* It is glanced at in 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. *You are made partakers of the Divine Nature.* The Man filled with the *Fulneſs* of God is filled with the *Nature* of God. God forbid we ſhould uſe the Gibberiſh of the Blaſphemous *Familiſts*; or talk of being *Godded with God*, like thus, A godly Man has a *New Nature* in him, a New *Temper* in him. It is *Divine* for the Original which it is a Copy of. When a Man is *full of God*, then he *loves* where God *loves*, he *hates* as God *hates*.

The *filled* Man ſees God in all the Works of *Providence* too. Nothing happens in the *World*, but he ſays of it, *This comes from that God whoſe Kingdom ruleth over all.* He aſcribes nothing to *Caſualty*, nothing to *Fatality*, and but little to Humane *Induſtry*. He accounts not of God as an Idle *Spectator* or *Superviſor* of Things here below: He is fully of that Belief, in *Mat.* 10. 29. *Not a Sparrow falls to the ground without God.* And nothing happens to himſelf, but he ſays of it, *This is by the ordering of that God who performeth all things for me.* He looks upon his *Enjoyments* as the *Smiles* of God. He doth not ſay, *By my Wiſdom, by my Traffick, have I gotten Gold and Silver.* No; but he ſays, as in *Pſal.* 11. 13. *This is the Lords doing.* He ſays of all his Mercies, as *Jacob* ſaid of his *Children*, *Theſe are the things that God hath graciouſly given me.* He looks upon his *Afflictions* as the *Rods* of God. He doth not ſay, *My Affliction comes out of the Duſt, my Trouble ſprings out of the Ground.* No; but he ſays, as he in *Amos* 3. 6. *Shall there be Evil in the City, and the Lord hath not done it?* Yea, though the *Hand* of Man, though the *Rage* of Man be never ſo much in his Troubles, ſtill he ſays, *It is God that bad* Shimei *curſe*; *It is God that ſent the* Chaldeans *to ſpoil.* In ſhort, This Man hath not many waking Hours without ſome *Thoughts* on God.

2. A Man that is *filled with all the Fulneſs of God*, is *filled* with a gracious *Reſemblance* of God. In the Bleſſed God, there is a *Fulneſs* of all Perfections. A good Man in his meaſure, hath ſomething

ſomething of that *Fulneſs* imprinted on himſelf; the *Glory* of God ſhines upon him, and he receives a little of his *Image*, he reflects a little of that *Brightneſs*. A Man *filled* with God, —that Man, according to the poor Capacity of a Man, comes to be *all that* which *God is*. *To be filled with God.* —We have a Paraphraſe upon it, in *Eph.* 5. 1. *Be followers of God as dear Children.* A Man *full of God*, is a Man *following of God.* This *Godly* Man is a *God-like* Man. He ſees that God is an *Holy* God; hereupon he reſolves with himſelf, *If God have no pleaſure in wickedneſs, If God be of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity, I will always be an Hater of Sin too.* He ſees that God is a *Righteous* God; hereupon again he reſolves with himſelf, *Since Gods Judgments always be Righteous, my Carriages never ſhall be Injurious.* He ſees that God is a *Merciful* God; hereupon this Man too endeavours evermore to be *giving* and *forgiving*, as like his *Heavenly Father*, as he can. We are adviſed in 1 *Pet.* 1. 16. to be *holy as God is holy.* We are adviſed in *Mat.* 5. 48. to be *perfect as God is perfect.* This it is to be *filled with God.* To be full of *Grace* is to be full of *God.* It is glanced at in 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. *You are made partakers of the Divine Nature.* The Man filled with the *Fulneſs* of God is filled with the *Nature* of God. God forbid we ſhould uſe the Gibberiſh of the Blaſphemous *Familiſt*; or talk of being *Godded with God.* But thus, A godly Man has a *New Nature* in him, a *New Temper* in him. It is *Divine* for the Original which it is a Copy of. When a Man is *full of God*, then he *loves* where God *loves*, he *hates* as God *hates*.

'Tis the *Nature* of the Man, 'tis his *Temper* ſo to do; the *Holineſs*, the *Righteouſneſs*, the *Goodneſs* of God are *copied* out upon him.

3. A Man that is *filled with all the Fulneſs of God*, is *filled* with a dutiful *compliance* with God. When the *Actions* of Man anſwer to the *Attributes* of God, then God fills that Man. Where God *fills* Man, there Man *owns* Him. The *Soveraignty* of God, --Let this *fill* a Man, with Acts of *Self-denial*, and *Reſignation*. When *David* was *full* of God, he could ſay, in *Pſal.* 39. 9. *I opened not my mouth becauſe thou didſt it.* The *Juſtice* of God, --Let this *fill* a Man with Acts of *Repentance* and *Humiliation*. When *Daniel* was *full* of God, he ſaid in *Dan.* 9. 8. *O Lord, unto us belongs confuſion of face, --becauſe we have ſinned.* The *Power* of God, --Let this *fill* a Man with Acts of *Dependance*. When *Jehoſhaphat* was *full* of God, he ſaid, in 2 *Chron.* 20. 12. *O our God, we know not what to do; but our Eyes are upon thee.* And the *Kindneſs* of God, --Let this *fill* a Man with *Love*, with *Praiſe*, with all manner of *Thankfulneſs*. The Pſalmiſt was *full* of God, when he cryed out in *Pſal.* 116. 12. *What ſhall I render to the Lord for all his Benefits!* There are *incommunicable*, as well as *communicable* Attributes in the moſt High God. We cannot *partake* of the former as of the latter; but we ſhould however *Anſwer* to both. Let every *Attribute* of God leave bleſſed Impreſſions of *Reverence* and *Obedience* in us; then are we *filled with God.* The pious *Romans* were thus *filled*; of whom we read, in *Rom.* 15. 14. *Ye are full of all goodneſs.*

4. A

4. A Man that is *filled with all the fulneſs of God*, is *filled* with an humble *Admiration* at God. When God *fills* a Man, the Man ſees that in God which calls for all his *wonderments* for his endleſs *Hallelujahs*. In *Pſal.* 71. 8. we read of *a mouth filled with Gods praiſe*. A *Man* is *full* of God, when his *Praiſe* is *full* of God, when his *Mind* is full of *Praiſe*. There is a particular way of *praiſing God*, which only Men that are *filled with his fulneſs* are uſed unto. *Abſolute* Praiſes, *abſtracted* Praiſes; with ſuch *Praiſes* we ſhould admire and adore the Almighty God. Sometimes the *kindneſs* of God *fills* our *Praiſes*; we *bleſs* him, we *thank* him for his Favours unto our ſelves. This is well; but this is not enough, the *fulneſs* of God ſhould alſo *fill* our *Praiſes*; then, then it *fills* our *Souls*. In ſuch an high ſtrain the *Doxologies* of the Apoſtles often run. We have alſo an illuſtrious Inſtance of ſuch *Praiſes* in *Pſal.* 145. throughout; it is entituled *Davids Praiſe*: The Pſalmiſt therein *praiſeth* God, not for any benefit proper to himſelf, but for the *greatneſs* of the *Excellencies* that are in God. O that now the moſt *feeble* among us may be as *David*! We ſhould be *filled* with *Admirations* at the infinite *Glory* which is in that God whoſe Name is *exalted above all Bleſſing and Praiſe*. 'Tis ſaid of one that knew how to *praiſe God* aright, in *Pſal.* 89. 24. *In my Name ſhall his Horn be exalted*. There is an *exalted Horn* which a good Man ſhould be deſirous of. But what is that? For my part I think the meaning of it may be fetched from 1 *Chron.* 25. 5. where we read of *words to lift up the*

Horn. With *Horns* or *Cornets*, did they of old uſe to ſound out the *Praiſes of God*. Our *Horn* is to be *exalted*. How to? Thus our *Praiſe* is to be *exalted*; it is to ſound higher and higher than at the common rate. We ſhould exalt our *Horn*, and our *Praiſe* in the *Name* of God; fill it with a big ſound of his ever glorious *Name*, though we may have perhaps but ſmall *Notes* of our own *Comforts* or *Delights*, of which to compoſe our Songs. Though our own circumſtances be never ſo bad or hard, yet we ſhould in the very *Belly of Hell* be with many *Praiſes* adoring the unſearchable *Glories* which belong to God; our Souls in a praiſing Admiration ſhould ſpread themſelves upon all the *fulneſs of God*: So, O ſo, we ſhall be *filled* with it.

5. A Man that is *filled with all the fulneſs of God*, is *filled* with an unſpeakable *contentation* in God. A *Delight* in God fills the Soul that is filled with the *fulneſs* of God. When God fills a Man, that Man counts himſelf to have enough in God. *One God* weighs down *Ten Worlds* in the reſentments of this Man. He doth *rejoyce in the Lord*; I ſay again, he doth *rejoyce in the Lord*; and no earthly *wants*, no particular *woes* can hinder him from doing ſo. There is a bleſſed intercourſe between God and Man, in this caſe. God ſays, as it was ſaid to *Abraham*, in *Gen.* 15. 1. *I am thy exceeding great reward.* Well, now Man ſays, as it was ſaid by *David*, in *Pſal.* 16. 6. *The Lord is my inheritance, and I have a goodly heritage.* A Man that is *full* of God, ſees that God is his portion; and this cauſes his

Batteries upon the Kingdom of the Devil.

SEASONABLE

DISCOURSES

UPON

Some Common, but Woful,

INSTANCES,

WHEREIN

Men Gratifie the Grand Enemy of their SALVATION.

By Mr. *Cotton Mather*, Author of *The late Memorable Providences relating to Witchcrafts and Possessions*; and of *Early Piety exemplified.*

LONDON,

Printed for *Nath. Hiller*, at the *Princes-Armes* in *Leaden-Hall-Street*, over-against St. *Mary Axe*. 1695.

not according to knowledge. Such a *Zeal* there is in many that *raſhly* burns like *Wild-fire*, and ſeeks to devour thoſe very things that are *holy, and juſt, and good.* And there is a more pardonable *Zeal* in others, that will furiouſly exclaim againſt, perhaps a true *Child* of God, and this becauſe of ſome *Innocent*, and it may be *Laudable* thing, which his Conſcience has cauſe to be well ſatisfied withal. Moreover, 'tis but a *raſh Zeal* for a Man to revile an *Opinion*, which for ought he does yet infallibly know, may be *a Glorious Truth of God.* It is not impoſſible that many things may be quickly underſtood and entertained as bleſſed Myſteries about the *Kingdom of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, which yet from the time that the *Kingdom of Antichriſt* has been in play, to this very day, the multitudes of good Men have with a *Raſh Zeal*, beſtowed ſhameful, railing, and odious Characters upon. Let us beware of all this *Raſhneſs.* And in oppoſition thereunto, let me recommend theſe two things.

Firſt, Let nothing be done too *ſuddenly.* Let us be Men of *Thoughts.* It was the practice of an Holy Man, which Preached many ſcores of Sermons in this very Pulpit long ago, That if any important *Queſtion* were asked him, he would not give an *Anſwer* thereunto, before he had made a *pauſe* which had ſome ſecret and ſilent *Ejaculations* in it. O did we but keep our *pauſes* well, there would be a general *Harmony* in our Lives! The *Jews* Report, that old *Adam* uſed to ſay, *A Man would never do amiſs, if he ſaw from the beginning to the end.* And it was

once

once the Mode of no raſh Perſon, when he ſaw any Man in haſte upon any thing, to ſay, *Pray ſtay a little, and we ſhall have done the ſooner!*

Secondly, Let nothing be done too *Angrily*. Be aſſured, nothing is done ſo well in *Anger*, but what may be done better out of it. The *Roman* Emperour, if he were *Angry*, would ſay, or do nothing till he had repeated, over all the Letters of the *Alphabet*. When a Man is *Angry* he's meerly *Frantick*. If your *Anger* be up, even make a ſtop; ſay nothing, do nothing, till at leaſt you have gone over the *Lords Prayer*, or ſome ſuch way cooled the *Fever*. All will be *Raſh* while the *Anger* holds. I need only add that Oracle in *Prov.* 13. 10. *With the well-adviſed is wiſdom.*

A P-

APPENDIX.

The Great Ambition of a Good Chriſtian.

EPH. iii. 19.

—That ye might be filled with all the Fulneſs of God.

THE greateſt Bleſſedneſs that any *Rational Creature* can arrive unto, is expreſſed in theſe Words. Words very fit to drop from the Pen of a Man that had been already in the *Third Heaven* among the Angels of God.

The Chriſtianiſed *Epheſians* had once too much dived into the *Depths of Satan*, by their *unlawful Arts*. At their Converſion, ſuch was their *Self-denial*, that they burned the *Manuſcripts* from which

which they had their curſed Skill, though according to *Luke*'s Computation, the value thereof was near Sixteen Hundred Pound Sterling. Behold them well-requited here; they are favoured with an Inſpired Epiſtle, wherein the *deep things of God* are ſet before them. The *chief things of the ancient mountains*, the *precious things of the everlaſting Hills*, the great Myſteries of *Election* and *Redemption*, and *Free grace*, are handled in this Epiſtle, truly ſo as not in any other. *Paul* himſelf appeals to this Epiſtle, as not the leaſt Evidence of his claim to *extraordinary Revelation*.

The Excellent Apoſtle was now *Priſoner* at *Rome*. That was no doubt a ſore Exerciſe unto his Children, his People at *Epheſus*. To comfort them under it, like a watchful *Paſtor*, yea, like a tender *Father*, he ſends them word, *Though I cannot preach to you, yet I do pray for you.* Our Context here tells us for what he prayed. A *Father* for his Children, a *Paſtor* for his People, cannot make a better *Prayer*.

The *Prayers* of ſuch a Man as *Paul*, ſure they are very *remarkable*, very *imitable* Prayers. There are, I think, *Seven* of thoſe Supplications, beſide what are in the *Salutations*, occurring in his *Writings*: Of them, This is one. It is a *Prayer* made up of *Petition* and *Thankſgiving*. In the *Petition* we have the *Object* and the *Matter* of the *Prayer*. The *Matter* of the *Prayer* has Four great Things contained in it: The *Fourth* and the *greateſt* of which is that which falls under our Diſcourſe at this Time. You may obſerve Three *Bleſſings* petitioned for; *Spiritual*

Bleſſings

Bleſſings in Heavenly Matters. In thoſe Three *Bleſſings*, the Intereſts, the Efficacies of all the Three Perſons in the Trinity, towards Believers, are diſtinctly wiſhed for. The *Prayer* is for the *ſtrengthening* Influence of God the *Spirit*; for the *in-dwelling* Preſence of God the *Son*; for the *revealed Love* of God the *Father*. But the laſt Bleſſing of all, takes in the whole *Godhead* for the *Baſis* of it. This is the Higheſt Prayer that no leſs than an Apoſtle *full of God* could make for any Perſons, —— *That ye might be filled with all the Fulneſs of God.* The Doctrine before us is,

To be filled with all the Fulneſs of God is an Attainment much to be deſired.

Two *Propoſitions* are to be inſiſted on, for the *Illuſtration* of this Truth.

PROP. I.

To be *filled with all the Fulneſs of God*, is a thing very far *attainable*. This Apoſtle joins this thing with ſuch things as *all Saints* do *attain* in ſome meaſure, to ſome experience of. The only thing to be now enquired, is,

What is that Fulneſs of God, which we are to labour for? Or, *When may a Man be ſaid to be filled with all the Fulneſs of God?*

This *filling*, truly it is a thing better *felt* than *ſpoke*: But what ſhall then be ſaid about the

Fulneſs

Fulneſs it ſelf, of which it is? It is one of the *unutterable things*, yea, it is one of the *unfathomable things*, which we are concerned in. We may ſay, as in 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. *Eye hath not ſeen it, nor Ear heard it.* But that we may attempt a little at it; ——The *Fulneſs* of God, is that *Communication* from God, wherewith he gives at once *Employment*, and *Satisfaction* unto the Souls of Men. A Man is then *filled* with the *Fulneſs* of God, when he is *viewing* of, and *acting* on, the *Fulneſs* in God. The Man thus *filled*, is both filled *by* God, and alſo filled *with* God. God is the *Author* by which, God is the *Object* from which, the Powers of the Soul are filled, when a Man is *filled with all the Fulneſs of God.* The Vacuities, the Diſorders cauſed in the Soul, by Sin, *Original*, or *Actual*, are by this *Filling* rectified. When the *Fulneſs* of God is *filling* of a Man, then the *Graces* of God are beſtowed on him, the *Glories* of God are affecting of him. Both of theſe go together; together therefore let us handle them.

O that our God may *keep theſe things in the Imagination of the Thoughts of our Hearts for ever.* Not accurate Scholarſhip, but *experimental Chriſtianity* alone will help us to conceive of theſe things. To particularize, --thus let us *think*, thus let us *do* and *live.*

1. A Man that is *filled with all the Fulneſs of God*, is *filled* with a continual *Apprehenſion* about God. How does God *fill* a Man? It is by cauſing that Man to acknowledge him as the God who *fills* the World. It is the Demand of the

the great God, in *Jer.* 23. 24. *Do not I fill Heaven and Earth? ſaith the Lord.* Truly, The Lord *fills* the *Heart* of a Man, by enabling the Man to diſcern that *Fulneſs* of His which *fills Heaven and Earth.*

A Man that is *full of God*, beholds *God* in every *place*. The Man goes not into any corner, but he ſays within himſelf, *The Eye of the Omnipreſent God is now upon me.* When the Man is trying to do a *good* thing, he thus encourages himſelf, *God ſees me, and will reward me, if I do it*: When the Man is tempted to do a *bad* thing, he thus antidotes himſelf, *God ſees me, and will deſtroy me, if I do it.* That Man ſubſcribes to this Article in *David's* Confeſſion of Faith, *Pſal.* 139. 7. I can go *no whither from the preſence of the Lord.*

Again, A Man that is *full of God*, beholds God in every *thing*. He ſees the *Face* of God in every *Work* of God. This Man ſticks not in *any Creatures*, ſtays not at *Second Cauſes*; with a ſpiritualized Soul, he ſoars up to *God* in all.

The *filled* Man ſees *God* in all the Works of *Creation.* He looks upon the whole World, as the *Building*, the *Temple* of God; *Præſentemque docet quælibet herba Deum.* He ſees God in every thing, from the *Sun* in the Firmament, to the *Stone* in the Pavement. He looks upon every thing in the World, with ſuch a Senſe of it, *The Finger of God is here; this is a thing ſubſiſting not of it ſelf, or for it ſelf, but in God, and for God.* He diſputes like *Paul* at *Athens*, in *Acts* 17. 24, 28. *God made the World, and all things therein; In Him we have our Being.*

The *filled* Man ſees God in all the Works of *Providence* too. Nothing happens in the *World*, but he ſays of it, *This comes from that God whoſe Kingdom ruleth over all.* He aſcribes nothing to *Caſualty*, nothing to *Fatality*, and but little to Humane *Induſtry*. He accounts not of God as an Idle *Spectator* or *Superviſor* of Things here below: He is fully of that Belief, in *Mat.* 10. 29. *Not a Sparrow falls to the ground without God.* And nothing happens to himſelf, but he ſays of it, *This is by the ordering of that God who performeth all things for me.* He looks upon his *Enjoyments* as the *Smiles* of God. He doth not ſay, *By my Wiſdom, by my Traffick, have I gotten Gold and Silver.* No; but he ſays, as in *Pſal.* 11. 13. *This is the Lords doing.* He ſays of all his Mercies as *Jacob* ſaid of his *Children*, *Theſe are the things that God hath graciouſly given me.* He looks upon his *Afflictions* as the *Rods* of God. He doth not ſay, *My Affliction comes out of the Duſt, my Trouble ſprings out of the Ground.* No; but he ſays, as he in *Amos* 3. 6. *Shall there be Evil in the City, and the Lord hath not done it?* Yea, though the *Hand* of Man, though the *Rage* of Man be never ſo much in his Troubles, ſtill he ſays, *It is God that had* Shimei *curſe*; *It is God that ſent the* Chaldeans *to ſpoil.* In ſhort, This Man hath not many waking Hours without ſome *Thoughts* on God.

2. A Man that is *filled with all the Fulneſs of God*, is *filled* with a gracious *Reſemblance* of God. In the Bleſſed God, there is a *Fulneſs* of all Perfections. A good Man in his meaſure, hath ſomething

ſomething of that *Fulneſs* imprinted on himſelf; the *Glory* of God ſhines upon him, and he receives a little of his *Image*, he reflects a little of that *Brightneſs*. A Man *filled* with God, --that Man, according to the poor Capacity of a Man, comes to be *all that* which *God is*. *To be filled with God*. --We have a Paraphraſe upon it, in *Eph.* 5. 1. *Be followers of God as dear Children.* A Man *full of God*, is a Man *following of God*. This *Godly* Man is a *God-like* Man. He ſees that God is an *Holy* God; hereupon he reſolves with himſelf, *If God have no pleaſure in wickedneſs, If God be of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity, I will always be an Hater of Sin too.* He ſees that God is a *Righteous* God; hereupon again he reſolves with himſelf, *Since Gods Judgments always be Righteous, my Carriages never ſhall be Injurious.* He ſees that God is a *Merciful* God; hereupon this Man too endeavours evermore to be *giving* and *forgiving*, as like his *Heavenly Father*, as he can. We are adviſed in 1 *Pet.* 1. 16. to be *holy as God is holy.* We are adviſed in *Mat.* 5. 48. to be *perfect as God is perfect.* This it is to be *filled with God.* To be full of *Grace* is to be full of *God.* It is glanced at in 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. *You are made partakers of the Divine Nature.* The Man filled with the *Fulneſs* of God is filled with the *Nature* of God. God forbid we ſhould uſe the Gibberiſh of the Blaſphemous *Familiſts*; or talk of being *God'ed with God:* But thus, A godly Man has a New *Nature* in him, a New *Temper* in him. It is *Divine* for the Original which it is a *Copy* of. When a Man is *full of God*, then he *loves* where God *loves*, he *hates* as God *hates*.

'Tis the *Nature* of the Man, 'tis his *Temper* ſo to do; the *Holineſs*, the *Righteouſneſs*, the *Goodneſs* of God are *copied* out upon him.

3. A Man that is *filled with all the Fulneſs of God*, is *filled* with a dutiful *compliance* with God. When the *Actions* of Man anſwer to the *Attributes* of God, then God fills that Man. Where God *fills* Man, there Man *owns* Him. The *Soveraignty* of God, --Let this *fill* a Man, with Acts of *Self-denial*, and *Reſignation*. When *David* was *full* of God, he could ſay, in *Pſal.* 39. 9. *I opened not my mouth becauſe thou didſt it.* The *Juſtice* of God, --Let this *fill* a Man with Acts of *Repentance* and *Humiliation*. When *Daniel* was *full* of God, he ſaid in *Dan.* 9. 8. *O Lord, unto us belongs confuſion of face, --becauſe we have ſinned.* The *Power* of God, --Let this *fill* a Man with Acts of *Dependance*. When *Jehoſhaphat* was *full* of God, he ſaid, in 2 *Chron.* 20. 12. *O our God, we know not what to do; but our Eyes are upon thee.* And the *Kindneſs* of God, --Let this *fill* a Man with *Love*, with *Praiſe*, with all manner of *Thankfulneſs*. The Pſalmiſt was *full* of God, when he cryed out in *Pſal.* 116. 12. *What ſhall I render to the Lord for all his Benefits!* There are *incommunicable*, as well as *communicable* Attributes in the moſt High God. We cannot *partake* of the former as of the latter; but we ſhould however *Anſwer* to both. Let every *Attribute* of God leave bleſſed Impreſſions of *Reverence* and *Obedience* in us; then are we *filled with God*. The pious *Romans* were thus *filled*; of whom we read, in *Rom.* 15. 14. *Ye are full of all goodneſs.*

4. A

4. A Man that is *filled with all the fulneſs of God*, is *filled* with an humble *Admiration* at God. When God *fills* a Man, the Man ſees that in God which calls for all his *wonderments* for his endleſs *Hallelujahs*. In *Pſal.* 71. 8. we read of *a mouth filled with Gods praiſe*. A *Man* is *full* of God, when his *Praiſe* is *full* of God, when his *Mind* is full of *Praiſe*. There is a particular way of *praiſing God*, which only Men that are *filled with his fulneſs* are uſed unto. *Abſolute* Praiſes, *abſtracted* Praiſes; with ſuch *Praiſes* we ſhould admire and adore the Almighty God. Sometimes the *kindneſs* of God *fills* our *Praiſes*; we *bleſs* him, we *thank* him for his Favours unto our ſelves. This is well; but this is not enough, the *fulneſs* of God ſhould alſo *fill* our *Praiſes*; then, then it *fills* our *Souls*. In ſuch an high ſtrain the *Doxologies* of the Apoſtles often run. We have alſo an illuſtrious Inſtance of ſuch *Praiſes* in *Pſal* 145. throughout; it is entituled *Davids Praiſe*: The Pſalmiſt therein *praiſeth* God, not for any benefit proper to himſelf, but for the *greatneſs* of the *Excellencies* that are in God. O that now the moſt *feeble* among us may be as *David*! We ſhould be *filled* with *Admirations* at the infinite *Glory* which is in that God whoſe Name is *exalted above all Bleſſing and Praiſe*. Tis ſaid of one that knew how to *praiſe God* aright, in *Pſal.* 89. 24. *In my Name ſhall his Horn be exalted*. There is an *exalted Horn* which a good Man ſhould be deſirous of. But what is that? For my part I think the meaning of it may be fetched from 1 *Chron.* 25. 5. where we read of *words to lift up the*

Horn. With *Horns* or *Cornets*, did they of old uſe to ſound out the *Praiſes of God*. Our *Horn* is to be *exalted*. How ſo? Thus our *Praiſe* is to be *exalted*; it is to ſound higher and higher than at the common rate. We ſhould exalt our *Horn*, and our *Praiſe* in the *Name* of God; fill it with a big ſound of his ever glorious *Name*, though we may have perhaps but ſmall *Notes* of our own *Comforts* or *Delights*, of which to compoſe our Songs. Though our own circumſtances be never ſo bad or hard, yet we ſhould in the very *Belly of Hell* be with many *Praiſes* adoring the unſearchable *Glories* which belong to God; our Souls in a praiſing Admiration ſhould ſpread themſelves upon all the *fulneſs of God*: So, O ſo, we ſhall be *filled* with it.

5. A Man that is *filled with all the fulneſs of God*, is *filled* with an unſpeakable *contentation* in God. A *Delight* in God fills the Soul that is filled with the *fulneſs* of God. When God fills a Man, that Man counts himſelf to have enough in God. *One God* weighs down *Ten Worlds* in the reſentments of this Man. He doth *rejoyce in the Lord*; I ſay again, he doth *rejoyce in the Lord*; and no earthly *wants*, no particular *woes* can hinder him from doing ſo. There is a bleſſed intercourſe between God and Man, in this caſe. God ſays, as it was ſaid to *Abraham*, in *Gen.* 15. 1. *I am thy exceeding great reward.* Well, now Man ſays, as it was ſaid by *David*, in *Pſal.* 16. 6. *The Lord is my inheritance, and I have a goodly heritage.* A Man that is *full* of God, ſees that God is his *portion*; and this cauſes his

his triumphing rejoycing Soul to ſay, *I am full, I am full, this is all my Salvation, and all my Deſire.* When a Man is glorioufly refreſhed with the *All-ſufficiency* of God, then he is filled with *all the fulneſs* of God. The *Favour* of God, the *Fellowſhip* of God, fills that Man with ſweet, quiet, joyful frames, in the abſence of all other things. When *David* had loſt all he had in the World, yet it is ſaid in 1 *Sam.* 30. 6. *He incouraged himſelf in the Lord his God.* There was a Man *full of God*! Such a Man, if he loſe the *good Will* of other Men, he counts that *Abrahams* priviledge *to be the Friend of God*, is better than *Pilates* ambition *to be the Friend of* Cæſar; he comforts himſelf in this, *God is my Friend ſtill, and his loving kindneſs is better than Life.* If he loſe his *Eſtate*, he counts that he hath only ſpilt a *Cup* of Water, while he hath a *Fountain* of Living Water at his Door; he ſays, *When I have no Bags, or Lands, or Ships, yet will I joy in the God of my Salvation.* To ſay no more, if he loſe the deareſt of his *Relations*, yet he finds, he feels that in one *God*, which abundantly *fills* up the room of all.

6. A Man that is *filled with all the fulneſs of God*, is *filled* with a perpetual *dedication* to God. God fills the *Souls* when God fills the *Aims* of Men. It was the mean Character of *Iſrael* in *Hoſ.* 10. 1. *He is an empty vine, he brings forth fruit unto himſelf.* But where you ſee a Man bringing forth *Fruit* to God, you may ſay, *There is a full Man, a Man full of God.* Such a Man hath his glances at *inferiour ends*, but all thoſe *ends* are *ſwallowed* up in God. When God fills

a Man, that Man can't with any Patience think that any but *God* ſhould have his *time*, his *ſtrength*, his *all*. He *dedicates* unto God all that he *doth*. He is driving a *Trade* for God in all. For this it is that he *eats*, he *drinks*, he *ſleeps*, and the reſt; he thinks with himſelf, *I will not do theſe things as a Beaſt, only to gratifie a Natural Appetite; but I will do them that I may be ſupported in the Service of God.* For this he *labours*, for this he *viſits* too; yea, for this he performs and attends the *Worſhip* of God. He is able to ſay, *This is that God may be glorified!* The Rule he goes by is that in 1 *Cor.* 10. 30. *Do all to the glory of God.* And he *dedicates* unto God all that he *hath*. All the *Powers* of his Mind, all the *Members* of his Body, he gives unto God in a *Covenant never to be forgotten*. He devotes unto God all his *Credit*, all his *Eſtate*, all his *Intereſt*; as we read of *David* in *Pſal* 30. 1. that the very Houſe he lived in, paſſed under a *Dedication* unto God. Finally, It is the unwearied ſtudy of this Man, how to promote the *glory* of God in the World; he is always contriving, *O what, what ſhall I do for my dear God!* This it is to be *full* of *him*. A Soul *fixed* on God, is a Soul *filled* with God.

II. To be *filled with all the fulneſs of God* is an Attainment very much *deſirable*. Here is a *Prayer* for a *Paul*! The Apoſtle had no ſooner mentioned this, but he adds, *Now unto him that is able to do above all that we ask or think, be glory.* Truly we cannot *ask* or *think* an higher thing than this, *O that I may be filled with all the*

the fulneſs of God! Two things are to be ſaid of this being thus *filled.*

Firſt, It is *Holineſs*, and therefore it is *deſirable*. *Holineſs* is *deſirable*; every Man ſhould deſire it. The Pſalmiſt could ſay, in *Pſal.* 16. 3. *The holy are the excellent, in whom is all my delight.* It becomes us to ſay, *Holineſs is excellence, of which is all my deſire.* Well, but what is *Holineſs*? It lies not principally in *Parties*, in *Garments*, or in the Rites of a Superſtitious *Phariſee.* No, but for a Man to be *filled with all the fulneſs of God*, for a Man to have God *poſſeſſing* of him, to have God *influencing* of him; this is true *Holineſs.* Such a Man may truly be called, *A man of God*; he is a very *Holy* Man. The *Tabernacle* of old was a very *holy* place. Why? we read in *Exod.* 40. 34. *The glory of the Lord filled it.* Thus the *Chriſtian* becomes a very *holy* Man, when *the fulneſs of the Lord filleth him.*

Secondly, It is *Happineſs*, and therefore again it is *deſirable*. *Happineſs* is *deſirable*; every Man *doth* deſire it. The unanimous voice of all Mankind is that in *Pſal.* 4. 6. *Who will ſhow us good?* Who will? Why, God will; nothing elſe can. Do we ask after *good?* Behold, all the poor things of *Earth*, and of *Time*, proclaim aloud unto us, *Good is not in me! Good is not in me!* There is *vanity* in them, there is *vexation* in them, but no *good*: Where then is *good?* 'Tis determined in *Pſal.* 73. 28. *It is good for me to draw near unto God.* The Man that is filled with *God*, is filled with *good.* To be full

of

of *Riches*, to be full of *Honours*, to be full of *Children*, will not make a Man *happy*. The *Spirit* of Man will *ſtarve* and *dye* if it have no other *fulneſs* to be nouriſhed by. O but to be full of *God*; —this is no leſs than *Heaven* it ſelf. It is the deſcription of *Heaven* it ſelf in *1 Cor.* 15. 28. that *God is all in all* there. The *Soul* of Man was *framed* for none but God, is *ſuited* by none but God. For a Man to take his leave of all inferiour things, and to be wholly taken up with *God* inſtead of all, —this is the *Heaven of Heaven* it ſelf. Tis impoſſible that a Man *full* of God ever ſhould be miſerable.

USE. I.

O *pity*, and the Lord pity! thoſe many *People* that ſeek and chooſe a *fulneſs*, but not of *God*. The Bleſſed God utters a wonderful Indignation at this thing, in *Jer.* 2. 13. *My people have forſaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out ciſterns, broken ciſterns, that can hold no water.* Alas, this lamentable Complaint is to be made of multitudes in the World. *All the fulneſs of God*, they have it not, they prize it not; they go to ſome *empty ciſterns*, that from thence they may *fill* themſelves. *Be aſtoniſhed, O ye heavens at this, and be horribly amazed, ſaith the Lord.*

There is a twofold *fulneſs* which is by many preferred before *all the fulneſs of God*. *O fooliſh people and unwiſe that they are, who thus* deſpiſe *the Lord!* There is,

Firſt, The *fulneſs* of *Mammon*, which many dote

dote upon. The Lord ſaid unto them in *Deut.* 6. 11. that he would give them *Houſes full of all good things.* Many perſons think that better than to have *Hearts full of all good things.* A *full* Purſe, a *full* Houſe, a *full* Barn; this the moſt of Men are for. But who is for a *full Soul?* We are told in *Pſal.* 17. 14. *The men of the world, God fills them with his treaſures.* The World is *full* of Men that care to be *filled* no otherwiſe than ſo. A vaſt deal of *Wealth*, and as little of *God* as needs muſt; this will very well ſerve their turn. We may ſpeak to theſe Men in the Language that one of the Antients has, *They have Incarnated their own Souls.* Woful Men; they make their *Souls* to be content with no other *fulneſs* than what their *Fleſh* calleth for. Theſe perſons are much to be pityed and reproved. Thy Soul will one day be ſtript of all this *fulneſs*; and what ſhall then become of that naked, ſhiftleſs, periſhing Soul? Methinks that voice of God may fall as a Thunder-bolt of *Death* upon the Heart of ſuch a Man, in *Luk.* 12. 20. *Thy ſoul ſhall be required of thee, then whoſe ſhall thoſe things be which thou haſt provided?* It was once the moan of *Naomi*, *I was full, but I am become empty.* This, this, will be the ſhriek of thy *friendleſs*, *helpleſs*, ill provided Soul at its departure hence, *I am empty, I am undone for evermore.* They that thus contemn the *fulneſs* of God muſt at laſt endure the *vengeance* of God. Theſe are the very perſons of whom the Lord hath ſworn in his *wrath*, they ſhall never *enter into my reſt.*

Secondly,

Secondly, There is the *fulneſs* of *Satan*, which many are notorious for. It was an expoſtulation uſed with a *Lyar*, in *Acts* 5. 3. *Why hath Satan filled thy heart?* This may be ſaid unto the *Drunkard*, the *Swearer*, the *Gameſter*, the *Perſecutor*, the *Reviler*, the *Sabbath-breaker*, the *Unclean perſon*, and the reſt, *Thou art not filled with God, but Satan hath filled thy forlorn doleful heart.* We read in *Rom.* 1. 29. of them that are *full of envy.* We read in *Mic.* 6. 12. of them that are *full of violence.* We read in *Matth.* 23. 28. of them that are *full of hypocriſie and iniquity.* O ſad ſights! It is a diſmal thing to ſee a Man under *Bodily* poſſeſſion by the Devil; but theſe Men are under a *Spiritual* poſſeſſion by the Devil, which is worſe by far. They are *filled by the Spirit which works in the children of diſobedience.* Theſe perſons are yet more to be pityed and rebuked. Man, thy Soul is not full of *God*, it will then be full of *Sin*; but when *Sin* is come *unto the full*, how ſwift, how ſore will *deſtruction* be? We read of ſome that ſhall be *filled with the fury of the Lord*; it will be the caſe of them that are not *filled with the fulneſs of the Lord.* They ſhall be as *Ovens*, as *Irons*, whom our God ſhall *fill* as a *conſuming fire.* To be *filled with the fulneſs of God* is the ſubſtance of *Heaven.* Well, to be *filled with the fulneſs of God* is the eſſence of *Hell* too. 'Tis the warning of God in *Pſal.* 75. 8. *In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; the dregs thereof all the wicked of the earth ſhall drink.* God preſerve us all from being *filled* with

with ſcalding Draughts of thoſe fiery venomous Dregs for ever.

USE. II.

Let it now be the endeavour of us all, *That we may be filled with all the fulneſs of God.* The beſt Men living need to be thus called upon. In reſpect of our *fitneſs* for Heaven, we are all too much deficient. The *fulneſs* of God muſt have a little more hold of us, and all will be well. Let what is *lacking in* our *Faith*, in our *Hope*, in our *Love*, *be perfected*; then we ſhall be ready for our Change. A little more of *God*, and then perhaps we ſhall be *meet for the inheritance of the Saints in light.*

But eſpecially theſe two Thoughts may awaken us in the purſuit of this great thing.

Firſt, Let a Man be *full of God*, and that's the way for him to be *full of Joy.* God is *Light*, God is *Life*: When God comes into any Soul, he moſt effectually ſaith, *Peace be unto this Soul.* The Man that has much of God in him, cannot be without much of *Peace* and *Joy.* We read in *Pſal.* 16. 11. about *fulneſs of joy.* Whence is a *fulneſs of joy* to be derived, but from a *fulneſs of God?* Truly *he that dwells in the high and holy place*, doth alſo dwell in the Spirit of this Man, ſtrongly *reviving*, ſtrangely *refreſhing* of him. Such Raptures of *Joy* do ſometimes fill the Soul of ſuch a Man, that he is ready to ſwoon and faint under them; he is forced to cry

cry out, *Lord, It is enough! O ſtay thy hand, I can bear no more! Now I know that God is my only God, and that he will bleſs me for evermore.* No doubt ſome in this Aſſembly have had ſuch Tranſports of *Joy*, when under the *plenitude* of the *Almighty*. But I have a better, a greater thing than this yet to ſay.

Secondly, Let a Man be *full of God*, and that's the way for him to be *full of uſe*. He will certainly be a moſt *uſeful* Man. It is the method of God, firſt to *fill* a Man, and then to *uſe* that Man. There is an *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory* which tells us of a Miniſter, whom God uſed for the Converſion of very many Souls; and it gives us this Character of him; ---it is in *Acts* 11. 24. *He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghoſt, and of faith*; and ſo by his means, *much people was added unto the Lord*. Let God be in a Man, and God will be *with* him. God will *direct* that Man, God will *proſper* that Man, who is *full* of him. Though *Dominion*, as they ſay, *is not founded in Grace*; yet the more of *Grace*, and the more of *God* there is in a Man, the more fit he is to diſcharge all *relations*, to ſuſtain all *capacities*. The Man that is *full of God*, is as a lighted Lanthorn; God ſhines in him, and through him, upon all that are about him; one ſhall hardly come into the company of that Man, but carry ſomething of *God* away. This Man has the Bleſſing of *Abraham*, *He is made a Bleſſing*.

Now, that we may obtain this *fulneſs*, all the *Ordinances* of God are profitable. Ply them all.

all. They are all the *Golden Pipes* by which this *fulneſs* is conveyed. But I ſhall particularly offer only Two *Rules*.

I. Let our Lives be filled with much *Prayer* to God, and our Souls will be filled with all the *fulneſs* of God. It is the Promiſe of God in *Pſal.* 81. 10. *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.* Frequent and fervent *Prayers* will marvellouſly diſpoſe us to receive the *fulneſs* of him, who *fills* only the *hungry with good things.* Then be much in Prayer; and eſpecially, be much in two ſorts of *Prayers*, in *Extraordinary* Prayers, and in *Ejaculatory* Prayers; let a Man have the former often in a *Year*, let a Man have the latter often in a *Day*; it will then ſoon be ſaid, *There is much of God in that Man.* The Soul *praying* unto God, is the Soul *panting* after God. It ſhall be *filled* with him.

II. Let us be *full of Chriſt*, and we ſhall be *full of God.* We have a Saviour, in whom is *the fulneſs of the Godhead Bodily.* The Man Jeſus is more *full of God*, than all the Angels in Heaven are. We are informed in *Col.* 1. 19. *It pleaſed the Father that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell.* What ſhall be done that we who have been *full of Sin*, and *full of Hell*, may come to be *full of God?* It is the Lord Jeſus by whom we muſt be filled. It is ſaid in *Eph.* 2. 1. [for ſo I would read it, *He fills all in all.*] *And you hath he filled, who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.* O let us acquaint our ſelves much with Jeſus Chriſt.

Christ. *Study* Christ Jesus, *follow* Christ Jesus, *implore* Christ Jesus; do those three things and Christ Jesus will dispense an incredible *fulness of God* unto you; you shall throughout all Eternity say, as in *Joh.* 1. 16. *Of his fulness have all we received.*

F I N I S.